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4th Republican lawmaker to run as 'independent' PAGE 2
CUC gets the green light to borrow $10M from bank. PAGE 5

OPINION METER

This week's poll:
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INSIDE

LOCAL

Why we need to conserve turtles when we see so many on our islands. ➤ PAGE 8

WORLD

A jury finds an Afghan father, his wife and their son guilty of honor killings. ➤ PAGE 16

LIFE & STYLE

Viola Davis and Octavia Spencer win big at the Screen Actors Guild Awards. ➤ PAGE 19

Steep hikes in fire code permits

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Businesses now have one other set of drastically increased rates to deal with and these are associated with proposed amendments to the Fire Safety Code, with permits going up from $20 to $500 or from $20 to $10,000 or by up to 49,900 percent, for example.

Rep. Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan) and the Saipan Chamber of Commerce described these proposed rate increases as "shocking," "ridiculous," and "draconian," among other things.

At the same time, Torres pre-filed yesterday a bill that seeks to increase the permits mostly by only $10 as opposed to the new rate increases of $480 to $9,980 proposed by the Department of Public Safety's Fire Division.

» **Fees up from $20 to $10,000 or by 49,900-pct. increase**
» **Torres pre-files bill blocking new rates**

Torres also asked DPS Commissioner Ramon C. Mafnas in a letter yesterday not to adopt the proposed permit fee increases "until the Legislature has a chance to review and recommend modifications to the Commonwealth Fire Safety Code Act of 1998."

"Moreover, I believe your 'Citation of Statutory Authority' is in error, and this fact should rescind your proposed changes," Torres told Mafnas.

Douglas Brennan, president of the

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GIFTS OF LUCK

Students of the Chinese Education Center are presented with red envelopes called *hong bao,* which usually contain money, during the Lunar New Year party organized by the Chinese Association of Saipan at the Fiesta Resort & Spa's Hibiscus Hall last Saturday to welcome the Year of the Dragon. The red color of the envelope symbolizes good luck and is supposed to ward off evil spirits.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

See story and more photos on Page 6

Sotomayor's visit inspires students, judges, lawyers

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Sonia Sotomayor, the first Hispanic U.S. Supreme Court justice and the first sitting justice to visit the CNMI, still managed to impress and inspire many Commonwealth students, judges, and lawyers despite her short, one-day visit.

Sotomayor conducted Sunday afternoon a two-hour *conversatorio* [Spanish for conversation] at the district court courtroom with members of the NMI Bar, court staff, and selected students and members of the 2011 Mock Trial competition. Students from Tinian and Rota also joined the program via videoconference.

The media was not allowed in during the *conversatorio* but *Saipan Tribune* was told that Sotomayor surprised the

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Hofschneider is Fund's board consultant

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Hofschneider

Heinz Hofschneider, a former political rival of Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, will soon sit as a consultant of the NMI Retirement Fund board of trustees, reportedly to help the agency "recover and find solutions" to the current fiscal condition of the islands' pension program.

Saipan Tribune sources said yesterday that the terms and conditions of the consultancy agreement have already been initially agreed upon by both parties.

It was only last Friday that the board of trustees first openly discussed the hiring of a board con-

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Local

4th Republican lawmaker to run as 'independent'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Rep. Frank Dela Cruz (R-Saipan) said he will seek re-election on Nov. 6 but will run as an independent candidate, joining three other incumbent Republican lawmakers who will also do the same. Others have yet to decide whether to run and under which party.

"As much as I respect the governor, I don't believe I can work well with the existing Republican organization right now," Dela Cruz, a House member from Precinct 3, told *Saipan Tribune.*

Dela Cruz

House minority leader Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan) and Rep. Ray Tebuteb (R-Saipan) earlier confirmed seeking re-election as independent candidates. Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan) is eyeing a run for the Senate, also as an independent.

Long-time Republican lawmakers expressed disappointment with the governor's selection as GOP president in November, when party bylaws were amended to allow a sitting governor to become party president and when an election of officers was held without inviting the incumbent Republicans.

Rep. Joseph Palacios (R-Saipan), meanwhile, confirmed yesterday he is seeking re-election still under the Republican Party.

While some Republican lawmakers are running as independents, some Covenant Party members and independents followed the governor to the Republican Party. They include Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogumoro (Cov-Saipan), House floor leader George Camacho (Ind-Saipan), and Rep. Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan).

Students oppose several pending bills affecting NMC

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Students of the Northern Marianas College, through Associated Students of NMC president Lawrence E. Camacho, have submitted to the Legislature's education committees a position paper detailing their disagreement with several pending legislation that, if enacted into law, will negatively affect the college.

Saipan Tribune learned that there are eight bills related to NMC that are sitting at the Legislature.

Camacho, who was present in last week's joint meeting with lawmakers at the campus, provided each legislator a copy of the two-page document indicating the sentiments and views of ASNMC on several bills.

According to Camacho, House Bill 17-39, the Postsecondary Education Amendment Act of 2010, encroaches on the autonomy of the college's administrative functions, which should be left to the college's Board of Regents and its administration in accordance and in compliance with established policies. Camacho said the "Legislature should limit its overarching legislations to preserve accreditation issues as a result of bills that infringes upon the administration of NMC autonomy."

House Bill 17-041, which proposes to rename NMC as the Gov. Carlos S. Camacho Northern Marianas College was also opposed by the student council.

"NMC exists to be identified as the only public institution of higher education in the CNMI. As such, the college has existed to be known nationally and internationally bearing the name and location of the college. Thus, this is a significant part of not only recognition of the only postsecondary public institution but also [in] marketing… itself," states part of the position paper, adding that the naming of any public institution in the CNMI should be credentialed by a commission or a group of individuals to rank the merits of naming, renaming, or designating any public office, building, or landmark.

The ASNMC president also cited the students' strong opposition to House Bill 17-188, which proposes to amend some provisions of the education tax credit. Camacho said that, as the only public college in the Commonwealth, NMC should remain a recipient of the education tax credit because NMC has made "exceptional use" of these funds.

Camacho said that House Legislative Initiative 17-8, which seeks to amend Article 15, Section 2 of the Constitution to authorize the election of Board of Regents members, is also problematic. He said this initiative will push the board's selection process into the political arena. At present, regents are appointed by the governor, with the consent of the Senate.

"This process, although not fully political proof, provides for a check and balance in the selection of individuals [who] would best represent the diverse community in the board," he stated, adding that students would rather see legislation that would address the non-voting representative on the board.

Another pre-filed legislation proposes to amend the Constitution to allow NMC regents to make certain exceptions to the Basic Residency Requirement rules. The ASNMC believes that if this legislation is passed, it will "undoubtedly impact the enrollment at NMC because it will boost the enrollment in other Western states including Hawaii and New Mexico."

Meantime, ASNMC indicated its support for four pending bills, which include House Bill 17-218, which proposes to establish priority allocations of educational funding pursuant to U.S. Public Law 110-229; Senate Bill 17-57, which proposes to add one student representative to the Board of Regents as a voting member; and Senate Legislative Initiative 17-12, which proposes to amend the Constitution to authorize the Board of Regents to revise NMC's mission statement.

Fund, govt in $500K loan settlement negotiation

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund and the Department of Finance are in a "settlement negotiation" relating to a $500,000 loan made by the central government two years ago.

Fund administrator Richard Villagomez disclosed that the amount was loaned out in 2010 to pay for the death claim benefits of employees during the period when the government was self-insured.

Villagomez said this period was when Moylan Insurance, the former life insurance carrier for the government's Group Health Life Insurance Program, dropped coverage due to some contract dispute. He said the loan was for the death claims benefits covering three weeks prior to the hiring of the Individual Assurance Co. as the government's new life insurance carrier.

According to Fund chair Sixto K. Igisomar, the government initially offered a repayment plan for the loan but this was rejected by the Fund because of the proposed terms and conditions. He is hopeful that negotiations will be finalized in February.

Saipan Tribune learned that the government has a little bit over one year under the original repayment term and wants to accelerate those payments in three equal lump sums to be paid to the Fund consecutively within three months. However, this option also proposes a waiver on penalties and fines.

Villagomez said the board cannot agree to the proposed waiver of penalties. Negotiations between parties, however, are ongoing, he added. He said the Fund is still collecting payments from this loan.

Early this month, the administration renewed the contract of Individual Assurance Co., the life insurance carrier for government employees, for another year or until January 2013. This renewal is a month-to-month extension that could be changed anytime during the period covered. The renewal terms did not indicate changes in the premiums or coverage of IAC.

The IAC contract expired in December. This renewal serves as the fourth extension.

Fitial renominates Alepuyo to PUC; Igisomar, Roberto named to Fund

» New election commissioner named

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial re-nominated Viola Alepuyo yesterday to serve on the Public Utilities Commission, three days after the commission's last meeting as no new commissioner had been appointed as of Friday. If the Senate and House confirm Alepuyo's re-nomination, her term will expire on Jan. 8, 2016.

The governor also re-nominated yesterday newly-confirmed Commerce Secretary Sixto K. Igisomar and Adelina C. Roberto to serve on the NMI Retirement Fund board of trustees.

Igisomar, the Fund board's current chair, represents Carolinians on the board, while Roberto represents women.

Fitial also nominated Norbert Hofschneider to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Election Commission to represent Tinian. If confirmed by the Senate, Hofschneider will serve a four-year term expiring on July 20, 2015.

The governor, in his one-page letter, requested the Senate and House's favorable action on Alepuyo's appointment. Alepuyo represents women/Carolinians on the commission.

Any nomination or re-nomination to the utilities commission requires the confirmation of both the House and Senate.

"Ms. Alepuyo is highly qualified to fulfill the vital responsibilities of this commission," Fitial told Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) and House Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan).

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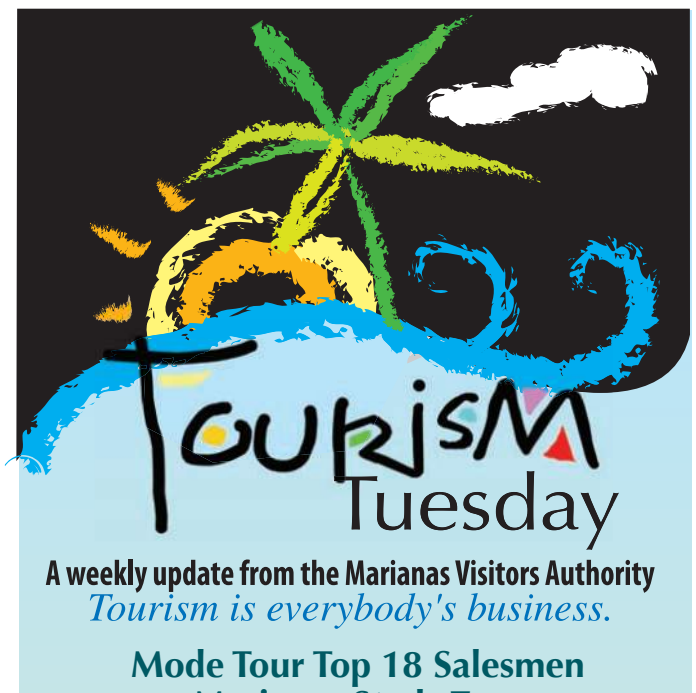

A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.

Mode Tour Top 18 Salesmen Marianas Study Tour

To further equip and motivate its top selling sales people selling Marianas products, the Mode Tour Top 18 Salesmen Marianas Study Tour on Nov. 30-Dec. 3, 2011, provided first-hand experience in the Marianas.

The study tour had the top Hana Tour salesmen and saleswomen visit Saipan. The winners were selected during an earlier Marianas Sales Contest.

During their stay, the sales people inspected Pacific Islands Club Saipan, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Fiesta Resort & Spa, Aqua Resort Club, Mariana Resort & Spa, and Saipan World Resort. They also took a tour of Managaha, Saipan, and downtown Garapan and participated in various water sports, shopping at DFS Galleria, bottom fishing, and a jungle tour. Their schedule also included a stop at the Garapan Street Market and a sunset cruise.

Although the trip schedule was rigorous, Hana Tour said it expects the tour will allow the sales people to use their hands-on experience to more confidently sell tour packages to the Northern Marianas. The Marianas Visitors Authority assisted with air transportation.

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This Tourism Tuesday space is provided by Saipan Tribune

Jury trial starts in lawsuit over alleged arson at clothing store

A federal jury trial began yesterday in a lawsuit filed by an insurance company that is suing the owner of a clothing store in Garapan over the alleged intentional burning of the establishment to collect $404,718.53 in fire insurance.

When *Saipan Tribune* left the courtroom yesterday afternoon, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona was still selecting the members of the jury.

Once a jury is impaneled, jury instructions then opening statements normally follow.

Attorney Richard W. Pierce is representing FirstNet Insurance Co. Attorneys Ramon Quichocho and Michael Dotts are counsels for Zhen Rui Brother Corp. that owns the former BL's Clothing Store.

Manglona

A fire broke out at the BL Clothing Store on Oct. 30, 2010.

In March 2011, fire policy insurer FirstNet sued Zhen Rui Brother Corp. for allegedly deliberately setting off the fire so that the owner could claim $404,718.53 in insurance proceeds.

Zhen Rui Brother Corp later filed a counterclaim against FirstNet, alleging breach of contract, breach of implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing, insurance bad faith, and unfair or deceptive business practices.

In December, Manglona denied Zhen Rui Brother Corp.'s motion for summary judgment, ruling that FirstNet has presented more than enough evidence to establish a dispute over liability for the jury to resolve at trial.

Manglona said it is undisputed that Zhen Rui Brother Corp.'s BL Clothing Store suffered substantial fire loss only a few months after the company took out the insurance policy.

Manglona said that firefighters had to break open the doors of the building to gain access and only the store's owner, Zheng Biao, and an employee had keys. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Man allegedly harasses witnesses in gun shooting case

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A man who was recently arrested for allegedly firing a gun during an argument with his girlfriend was arrested again Thursday night on charges of harassing two witnesses in a prior case.

Juan B. Roberto, 52, was taken to the Superior Court yesterday afternoon for a bail hearing on charges of contempt of court and disturbing the peace.

He was initially not allowed to post bail but associate judge David A. Wiseman later set the amount at $100,000 cash, saying he finds the suspect an extreme danger to the community. He cited Roberto's prior cases, including his alleged admission to firing three rounds of an unregistered gun.

"You never listen to the court," Wiseman told the defendant.

Detective Peter A. Aldan stated in his report that two women who are witnesses and victims in a prior case involving Roberto were at their residence in Dandan on Thursday night when Roberto began shouting in front of his house, next to the two women's house.

Roberto then allegedly drove his pickup truck recklessly in front and around the women's residence. He accelerated the engine, causing the tires to spin, burning rubber. At the same time he was shouting out the window of his truck.

One of the women tried to leave with her daughter but, as she was backing her car out of the garage, Roberto approached her side of the car holding a coconut and mimed throwing the coconut at the rear end of the car.

The other woman remained inside the house and locked the front door.

The woman in the car quickly left, at the same time calling a detective on her cell phone.

Police officers responded to the scene and arrested Roberto. Both victims were shaking with fear and were on the verge of tears during the police interview.

On Jan. 22, 2012, Roberto was arrested at his residence for domestic violence. He allegedly admitted to firing off three live rounds of an illegal firearm in his house in the presence of his girlfriend.

Assistant attorney general Eileen Escudero Wisor said the police later found a .22 caliber Ruger rifle at the crime scene and three shell casings, along with several 9mm ammunitions.

In addition, she said, police recovered marijuana plants and paraphernalia of marijuana and methamphetamine or "ice."

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Rudnytsky enchants Saipan once more with his music

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

Critically acclaimed international pianist Roman Rudnytsky graced the island once more with his exceptional talent, performing Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club's Charley's Cabaret for a Friends of the Arts production dubbed "An Evening of Magical Music."

Rudnytsky's repertoire featured powerful renditions of *Sonata in F* by Ludwig van Beethoven; *Nocturne in C sharp minor* by Fryderyk Chopin; *Venus, the Bringer of Peace* by Gustav Holst; *Molly on the Shore* by Percy Grainger; Jackaroo—Toccata for the Piano by Neil Goodchild; *Sonata in B Flat by* Muzio Clementi; *Estampes, Pagodes, Soiree dans Grenade, Jardins sous la pluie* by Claude Debussy; and *Grand Galop Chromatique Sonetto del Petrarca No. 123 Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6* by Franz Liszt.

Watching Rudnytsky play was magic in itself. His fingers would stroke the keys swiftly yet smoothly and ever so delicately, filling the air with amazingly beautiful music. In between his program, Rudnytsky would describe the featured composition, adding in a little bit of trivia about the work and the composer behind it.

The program concluded with a standing ovation.

"What a wonderful program. He never fails to disappoint. He's come with his program and obviously, he's a magnificent performer," said Susan Fishman-Tudor, FOA president, who also described Rudnytsky as "a nice man, kind, generous, and tireless."

She added, "To entertain people of this caliber, you need support or you just need a man like Roman."

Following his show and autograph signing, Rudnytsky recounted in an interview how it felt like being back on the island he first visited about two decades ago.

"I always thought it's just one of the nicest, loveliest islands so every time I come here, I've enjoyed being here. This is the fifth time now and this is actually the longest time because I'm here for two weeks," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Rudnytsky's visit is part of his Micronesian tour. He had just visited Guam and is scheduled to go to Kwajalein, Roi-Namur, and Majuro.

Rudnytsky, who arrived two Sundays ago, has already spent time with public school students from Marianas High School, Saipan Southern High School, and Kagman High School. Today, he is scheduled to fly to Tinian to meet with students there as well.

"It was very nice," he shared. "The students were extremely attentive. They were very quiet; they listened well. I think 95 percent of them were hearing a classical piano for the first time ever."

Asked why he wanted to meet with the students, Rudnytsky said he wants to inspire and bring good music to these young minds.

CLARISSA V. DAVID
Critically acclaimed international pianist Roman Rudnytsky performs at the Pacific Islands Club's Charley's Cabaret on Sunday.

"There's an old cliché saying music is the universal language. And it is. It really is. It brings people together, it unites people and I think that to make music in whatever way, it brings something satisfying to you as a person if you do it and it brings pleasure and joy to whoever is listening to you. I think it's important for young people to have exposure to that," he explained.

Born to a musical family from Ukraine, the American-born Rudnytsky began to study the piano at the age of 4 and gave his first full recital at 7. He graduated from the renowned Juilliard School in New York, pursued higher studies at the Peabody Conservatory in Maryland, and did master classes in Austria and Italy.

"I never decided to play the piano. I always say the piano found me because my father started me when I was 4 years old. I showed that I had a perfect pitch even before that," he revealed.

According to Rudnytsky, people tend to "shy away" from classical music because they have a preconceived notion of what it is.

"I think that the more you listen, the more you know…Once they hear it, they see something which is enjoyable, which has passed the test of time, something which can give them a lot of pleasure. But they have to hear it," he said.

Rudnytsky, who has performed in over 95 countries and "been to more than that," said he would have been in the travel industry if he were not a pianist.

"I enjoy traveling. It's part of what I do," he said, adding that he has been to "very unusual places" in the world like Timbuktu and Easter Island.

Rudnytsky underscored that he would want his audience to have a sense of something meaningful after hearing his music.

"I hope that they will gain more and more just by listening to more good music or good art of any kind. I hope that they will gain something very meaningful in their lives for it. Take every opportunity to do that…It will give you some kind of meaning and will elevate you and enrich you. That's what I hope for them," he added.

SOTOMAYOR

From Page 1

participants when she changed the seating arrangement, letting the students sit in front of her instead of the judges and other VIP guests.

Dung Hee Im, a student of Marianas Baptist Academy and a member of 2011 Mock Trial champion team, said she wants to become a prosecutor as Sotomayor was a prosecutor too.

"I was very inspired with what she had said," Im said, adding that Sotomayor was very nice and that she's very honored to meet her. "Although she had many obstacles and problems she overcame them."

Im asked Sotomayor if she thinks the separation of powers is effective. Sotomayor reportedly replied that since America has been working for more than 200 years, it is effective and that powers have been separated equally.

"She believes it's all good," Im said.

Manatsu Omori, another member of last year's Mock Trial champion team from MBA, said he initially thought that Sotomayor would be a "little bit serious."

"She's quite the opposite. She loves to talk. She loves to joke around. And when she's there you feel like talking also," Omori said.

Omori's question focused on Sotomayor's Hispanic background, saying that being the first Hispanic justice there's sure to be some challenges that she has faced with some people. He asked her how she faces those problems and how she focuses on her job.

Omori said that Sotomayor narrated that as she was starting with her law career, she was rejected by so many law firms because she was "Hispanic."

Omori said that Sotomayor told him to just keep working hard. "As long as you believe in yourself, you keep trying working hard, things can be accomplished," Omori said, quoting the justice.

Jodel Fernandez, also a member of the MBA champion team, said that when she went in she was feeling really uncomfortable and kind of scared.

"The way she talked to us, she made us feel comfortable. She was really humble. She was like relating herself as a student," Fernandez said.

Fernandez asked Sotomayor why she chose to be a prosecutor instead of a defense attorney. Sotomayor reportedly replied that what got her into becoming a prosecutor was a TV show.

"From there, she told the story of one of the episodes that made her interested…the idea to become an attorney and more specifically a prosecutor," she said.

Board of Education member Galvin Deleon Guerrero said that Sotomayor was very inspiring to the students.

"It's very inspiring for them to hear Justice Sotomayor's humble origins. She just worked hard. That's her point. She kept on emphasizing: That you just keep on working hard," Deleon Guerrero said.

Public School System legal counsel Kelley Butcher said she wished her son could have attended the *conversatorio* because Sotomayor was so inspirational.

"She was really giving her message to the students and really giving them that inspiration and hope, that life experience," Butcher said.

Attorney Joe Hill took inspiration from the fact that Sotomayor reached out to the young students of the CNMI, particularly those involved in the mock trial program.

"And it was very inspiring to everyone," Hill said.

For retired judge Herbert Soll, it is a great honor for the CNMI, a group of small islands, to have a U.S. Supreme Court justice taking the time to come out and meet the people.

HIKES

From Page 1

Saipan Chamber of Commerce, also earlier asked Gov. Benigno R. Fitial to withdraw and amend the new fire permit fees to truly reflect actual costs associated with "necessary, responsible and valuable fire inspections and permitting" for all CNMI commercial establishments.

The $20 annual permit for storing or handling aerosol products, for example, will go up to $500—a 2,400-percent increase from the 1999 rates based on DPS Fire's proposed amendments. Amendments in 2005 didn't reflect changes in the fee schedule.

The $20 permit to operate aircraft refueling vehicles will become $1,000.

Some $20 permits will go up to $5,000, while some $20 permits will go up to $10,000—an increase of 49,900 percent.

Even a $10 permit for putting up a Christmas tree will go up to $100.

"It's shocking for small to large businesses to see all these increases. They are too much," Torres told *Saipan Tribune*. "Now it's more expensive to get a fire permit of $500 annually than to obtain a business license for $50 a year."

Besides the $500 fire permit fee, there's also a re-inspection fee of $500, on top of all other permits and fines.

The Chamber, the largest business organization in the CNMI, said that while they believe that fire code inspection and enforcement promotes fire safety, the new permit and inspection fees are "draconian, and above an acceptable range businesses should be charged at any time, let alone during this harsh economic recession."

DPS Fire Division's proposed amendments to the Fire Safety Code seek to update existing fire cords, standards and guidelines with the most current published editions.

Thomas Manglona, chief of the Department of Public Safety's Commonwealth Fire Division, said it's time that the CNMI update its fire code to be in line with national and international standards and change its rates to reflect increased operational costs.

Torres, in his House Bill 17-275, places the authority to raise fire permit fees and fines in the Legislature, which would also have the power to establish a new fee and fine schedule.

He said fire prevention and operations are important to the CNMI, and reasonable fees should be established to help the costs of adequate fire services in the CNMI.

Most of the annual permits and fees proposed by Torres' HB 17-275 are $30. Some are $10 and $20.

Richard Pierce, executive director of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, said yesterday that after initial review, it appears HB 17-275 "would certainly be a welcome alternative to the Jan. 30, 2012, adopted Fire Code fee schedule."

"There appears to be no loss in fire safety issue inspection integrity, while the fee structure does not unduly burden commercial operations in the CNMI. SCC would support this legislation, especially considering the astronomically increased rate structure that was to take effect today," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

FITIAL

From Page 2

Alepuyo approved a total of 19 proposals during Friday's meeting, which was effectively the commission's last meeting as no new commissioner had been appointed at the time. Alepuyo, the sole remaining commissioner, will end her term in March but the governor submitted Alepuyo's name to the Legislature for re-nomination much earlier than that.

The governor also submitted to the Senate on Jan. 25 copies of resumes, statements of financial interest, drug test receipt, and criminal records of Alvaro A. Santos and Gregoria R. Fitial-Omar, to support their re-appointment of Dec. 29.

Santos represents Saipan on the MPLT board. If confirmed by the Senate, he will serve another six-year term that will expire on Jan. 8, 2018.

Omar represents the Carolinian community and women's sector on the MPLT board. Like Santos, Omar's term if confirmed will be renewed for another six years or until Jan. 8, 2018.

CONSULTANT

From Page 1

sultant at a cost of $70,000 per annum.

Board chair Sixto K. Igisomar confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* yesterday the "hiring" of Hofschneider for the position but declined to elaborate pending the signing of the formal agreement. He expressed belief, though, that Hofschneider will be an asset to the Fund.

Although a final contract has yet to be signed, Igisomar said that Hofschneider will mostly likely accept it. He expects the agreement to be signed within the week.

"Yes, I am negotiating a contract with Mr. Hofschneider and we're currently ironing out some details of his contract," he said. These details pertain to the "deliverables" expected of Hofschneider.

Hofschneider will be hired through a sole-source contract.

The Fund is authorized to enter into sole-source contracts within the next three months in the wake of the enactment of the bill that repealed the controversial Beneficiaries Derivative Act. One of the new law's provisions suspends procurement regulations for 90 days.

Hofschneider was a gubernatorial candidate in 2001, 2005, and 2009. His best gubernatorial election result came in 2009, when he was the Republican standard bearer. He won the initial popular vote but failed to gain a majority, triggering a runoff against the incumbent, Fitial, who then won the runoff by 370 votes and was re-elected. Hofschneider is also former speaker of the House of Representatives.

Fitial, who was the standard-bearer of the NMI Covenant Party, returned to the Republican Party last year and is currently its president.

Recently, the governor appointed Hofschneider's former runningmate, Arnold Palacios, as secretary of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources. He is currently the director of the Fish and Wildlife Division, a post that he also got from Fitial.

Igisomar told *Saipan Tribune* that with the current situation of the pension program, the board has to seek the best ways on how it can improve its situation. Based on the projection of the Fund's former actuarial consultant, the pension plan is expected to be depleted in three years if no new money comes in.

From over $500 million, the Fund's investment portfolio went down to only $256.7 million in December 2011, mainly due to the continued withdrawals being made by the Fund to pay for the pensions of retirees. The government also continues to fail to remit its employer share.

CUC gets the green light to borrow $10M from bank

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission approved during its last meeting Friday on Capital Hill a Commonwealth Utilities Corp. proposal to borrow $10 million that will be used to upgrade its facilities.

This comes soon after a bill authorizing the utilities company to borrow the money from the Rhode Island-based Independence Bank was enacted into law.

CUC deputy executive director Alan Fletcher lauded commissioner Viola Alepuyo's decision and told *Saipan Tribune* that the agency can now move forward.

The $10-million loan will be used to improve CUC's services such as those related to power generation and stipulated order requirements and for CUC projects on Rota and Tinian.

"The securing of that loan was contingent upon getting rate relief. With [Friday's] PUC approval, what we need to do is go back to work. We need to do assessment to make sure we have the right debt coverage ratio and that we would able to pay our creditors," Fletcher said.

On Friday, the commission authorized CUC to increase its electric base rate and water rate. Revenue raised from this rate hike is expected to help pay for the loan.

"CUC needs to go back to the table now, check our calculation and we will begin talking with Independence Bank and we will do it [right away]," Fletcher said.

Fletcher hastened to add, though, that the loan is not yet secure, pending the approval of Independence Bank. "I'm not going to say it's a sure thing…but we're optimistic. That money is critical to our operation," he added.

CUC wants to borrow $10 million from Independence Bank of East Greenwich to complete the requirements of two stipulated orders that require CUC to upgrade its equipment to be able to supply potable water and to ensure oil containment at its power plants. This loan proposal has the backing of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Five companies confirm participation in PIC's human duck race

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Five teams have confirmed their participation in the Race Around the River, Pacific Islands Club's corporate human duck race challenge that is part of the 2012 Duck Race for Cancer slated for Feb 11.

PIC activities manager Glenn Policare said yesterday that Island Apparel, Coca-Cola/Foremost, The Law Offices of Robert Torres, Docomo Pacific, and Joeten Enterprises will be vying for a team-building night for 30 persons and two cases of drinks at PIC's Laser Tag Park.

The Race Around the River is part of PIC's Duck Race for Cancer, an annual fundraising event in support of the Commonwealth Cancer Association's efforts to fight cancer in the CNMI.

This year's event, which will feature the "PIC Duck Queen," will have a twist.

"Participants will still don swim caps, life jackets and fins, but this year they will be swimming with a giant inflatable duck," Policare told Saipan Tribune. "We tried to even out the field and make it so anyone could win!"

The event will be highlighted by the actual duck race, where plastic ducks will be released at PIC's Lazy River in a race to the finish line.

The owners of the three fastest ducks will win $1,000 for first place, $300 in second, and $200 in third.

Ducks will be available at the Garapan Street Market on Feb. 2 and 9 for only $5 each. Policare disclosed that they always try to "sell as many ducks" as they can, with this year's goal set at 2,012.

"We have come close to each year so I hope this is the year everyone helps out just a little. You don't have to buy five or 10 ducks to win. Like I always say, it just takes one," said Policare.

Policare, who lost his mother to cancer in 2001, urged the community to support the PIC event and CCA, which "has many programs in place to support cancer awareness and prevention."

"I am proud to be spearheading this event and am calling on each and every person who reads this to chip in just a little. I know times are tough but they pale in comparison to those suffering from cancer. The cost of a duck is just $5. If we all bind together, there is nothing we cannot accomplish," added Policare.

For more information, call 234-7976 or call activitiesmanager@picsaipan.com.

Tourism partners promote Saipan-Osaka route

MVA

Representatives of five travel agencies and a daily newspaper in the Osaka region pause for a photo at Hyatt Regency Saipan on Jan. 18, 2012. The group is visiting the Northern Mariana Islands this week on a FAM(iliarization) tour aimed as promoting this beach resort destination.

Asiana Airlines and the Marianas Visitors Authority have teamed up with other tourism partners this month on a FAM(iliarization) tour aimed at promoting the Northern Marianas, while trying to keep new flights between Saipan and Osaka, Japan in service beyond the peak travel season.

Arriving Feb. 18, representatives of five travel agencies and one Osaka newspaper took a whirlwind tour of Saipan. The travel agent group left no stone unturned, with scheduled inspections of Hyatt Regency Saipan, Pacific Islands Club Saipan, Saipan Grand Hotel, Saipan World Resort, Hafadai Beach Hotel, Mariana Resort & Spa, Aqua Resort Club, and Fiesta Resort & Spa. Other stops on the itinerary included Managaha, Kingfisher Golf Links, Laolao Bay Golf Resort, DFS Galleria, and the Garapan Street Market.

Meanwhile, the media reps opted for an island tour, a dinner show at Fiesta Resort & Spa, the Las Vegas-style SandCastle cocktail show, kayaking, and snorkeling.

"This type of FAM tour is an important part of getting the word out in the Osaka region that the Northern Marianas is a clean, beautiful, and close destination," said MVA Marketing Manager Bruce Bateman. "We are extremely fortunate to have the support of Asiana Airlines and other tourism partners in making this tour possible. We expect exposure tours like this will continue to build demand in the region."

The participating newspaper, Yukan Fuji, is a famous daily evening newspaper distributed to subscribers and sold at newsstands with a distribution of 1.9-milion readers. The paper will feature a cultural excursion article on Saipan in early February at an estimated ad value of $27,000.

The MVA conducted a Marianas Seminar on the destination during the tour, in tandem with presentations by Asiana Airlines and Japan Saipan Travel Association. The MVA also provided ground transportation and handled permitting for the FAM tour. ***(MVA)***

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ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF
WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL, INC.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

WELLS FARGO FINANCIAL, INC. Plaintiff, -v- **CARMEN D. TUDELA, and PATRICIO F. TUDELA** Defendant.	**CIVIL ACTION NO. 11- 0151** **NOTICE OF SALE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court on December 20, 2011, in this matter, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth herein below, all of the right, title, and interest of defendants Carmen D. Tudela and Patricio F. Tudela in and to the following real property located at Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands:

LOT 010 K 305, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 010 K 01, the original of which was recorded on August 19, 1987, as Document No. 87-2910 at the office of the Commonwealth Recorder's, Saipan.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on February 7, 2011, at the hour of 4:00 p.m., at the law offices of Mailman & Kara, LLC, 2nd Floor, Tan Marikita Bldg., Beach Road at Cpl. Derence Jack Street, Garapan, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Inspection of Property. It is the responsibility of each bidder to inspect the property prior to the sale. Failure to inspect the property or any portion thereof will not constitute ground for any claim, adjustment, or rescission by any buyer.

Warranties and Covenants. All property listed for sale in this Notice will be sold in its current condition, and at its current location. The sale will be held without any warranties or covenants whatsoever, whether express or implied, including but not limited to warranties of title, merchantability, and/or fitness for any purpose whatsoever, all of which warranties and covenants are hereby expressly disclaimed. Neither the undersigned nor the plaintiff may give any warranty or covenant, express or implied, with respect to the property listed for sale in this Notice. Neither the undersigned nor the plaintiff shall be liable for the quality of the property listed for sale in this Notice, or for any fault or defect in the description thereof. Buyers shall not be entitled to rescission, damages, or any other remedy on account thereof.

Conduct of Sale.

a. Reserve. The auction sale may be held with reserve. The reserve price on any property offered for sale may or may not be disclosed to bidders, in the sole discretion of the undersigned.
b. Rights and duties of auctioneer. Consistent with the laws, customs, and usages of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales, the undersigned shall have the following rights and duties in conducting the auction sale: (1) to withdraw the property listed for sale in this Notice before sale or before a bid for such property is accepted; (2) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before any specific property is struck off, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and (3) to reject, on behalf of the seller, any or all bids, for any reason.
c. Bids. Bids may be submitted in advance for any or all of the property listed in this Notice. The highest of such bids will automatically be considered the opening bid for the item. Advance bids may be submitted only in writing, signed by the bidder, and delivered to the law offices of Mailman & Kara, LLC, 2nd Floor, Tan Marikita Bldg., Beach Road at Cpl. Derence Jack Street, Garapan, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The bidder assumes all risk of non-delivery, late delivery, or mis-delivery of bids. Any person, including the plaintiff, may bid in person at the auction sale, whether or not such person has submitted an advance bid.
d. Disputes. The undersigned may resubmit any property listed in this Notice if a dispute arises as to any bid thereon.

Enforcement of Auction Sale.

a. Deposit. Every successful bidder shall pay to the undersigned a deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price immediately after the sale is consummated. Payment shall be in cash or by certified check. The balance must be paid to the plaintiff, in care of Mailman & Kara, LLC, within three (3) days from the date of sale, in cash or by certified check. If the balance is not so paid, plaintiff will retain the deposit as liquidated damages, and will again offer the property for sale.
b. Memorandum of Sale. If requested by the undersigned, every successful bidder must sign a Memorandum of Sale, immediately after the sale of any property is struck off at auction.
c. Court Approval. Every sale may be subject to approval by the Court. The auctioneer makes no warranties or promises with respect to court approval of the sale, including but not limited to the time in which such approval may be granted. No delay in the granting of court approval shall be ground for any claim, adjustment, or rescission by any successful bidder. The successful bidder will be promptly notified if and when court approval is sought, and if and when it is granted.

Change of Terms and Conditions. The undersigned and the plaintiff reserve the right to change any of the terms hereof by announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause, shall be binding on all bidders by constructive notice.

DATED, this 10th day of January, 2012.

/s/ RONNIE D. HODGES, Auctioneer

Saipan's Chinese community rings in the Year of the Dragon

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarisssa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

About 300 community members took part in the Chinese New Year program hosted by the Chinese Association of Saipan at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Hibiscus Hall last Saturday.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

Hundreds of Chinese community members and guests on Saturday filled the Fiesta Resort & Spa's Hibiscus Hall for the Lunar New Year party organized by the Chinese Association of Saipan to welcome the Year of the Dragon.

The revelers were treated to good food and entertainment that began with the traditional lion dance performance to ring in good fortune throughout the year for about 300 guests that included officers and members of the Chinese Association and dignitaries like Mayor Donald G. Flores and Superior Court associate judge David Wiseman.

Flores, in his remarks, extended his well wishes on the occasion to the Chinese community on Saipan and his gratitude to their contributions to the islands—"from the delicious Chinese food and cuisine to the graceful dances at our annual Liberation Day Parade."

"I hope that the Year of the Dragon brings greater success and prosperity for Saipan and Chinese communities across the world…I wish you all an even better year with good health and fortune," said Flores.

Guests indulged in authentic Chinese cuisine that included pork hocks with vegetables, fried chicken, chop suey, shrimp and roast pork fried rice, and *tikoy*, among others. Exciting prizes were raffled off, including lunch certificates, hotel stays and other gift certificates, appliances, and a round-trip ticket to Shanghai.

Lion dance performances serve as the opening act during Saturday's show.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

Students from the Chinese Education Center sing for the audience.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

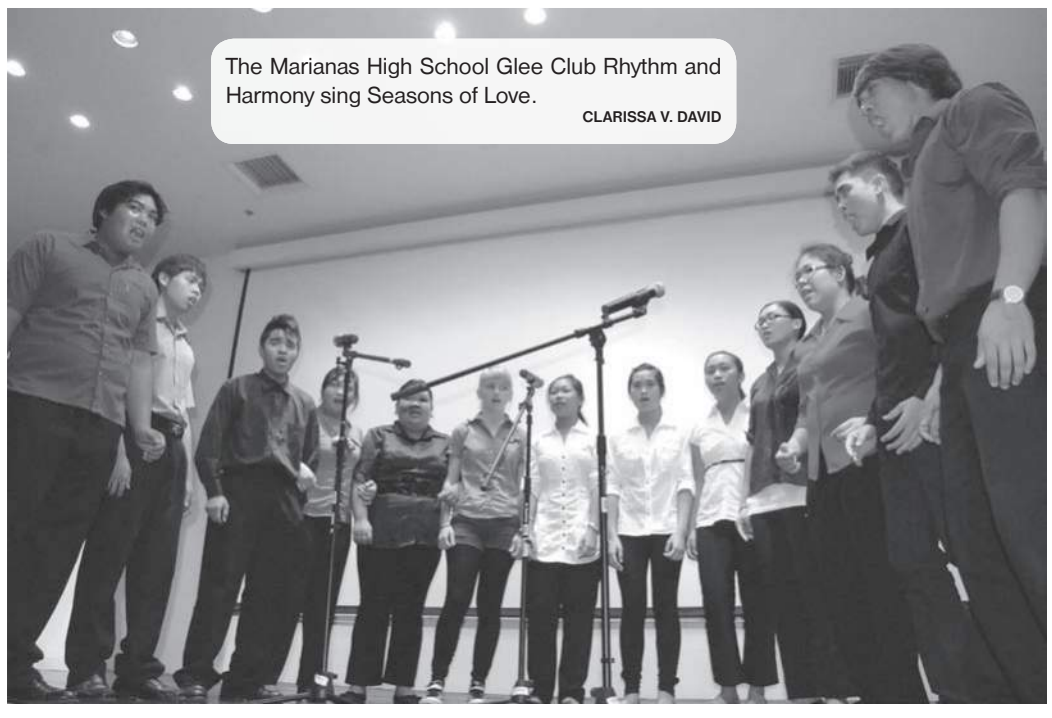
Saturday's event also featured performances by students of the Chinese Education Center, Trace Tian, the Marianas High School Glee Club's Rhythm and Harmony, Inatua Chamorritas, and the Refaluwasch Warriors. World-renowned piano virtuoso Roman Rudnytsky also graced the show and wowed the crowd with his remarkable talent.

Association director and former president Rose Chan said that the "Chinese New Year is a very important part of Chinese culture so we want to have the good traditional things through this event."

Chan, who is also principal of the Chinese Education Center, said the celebration is especially important for the younger Chinese generations. "We want the Chinese on island to carry on with their traditions even though they're away from home. We want them to know their culture and not forget it," she said.

Sponsors and donors include ACA, Century Travel, Crystal Palace/Micro Beach Hotel, City Trust Bank, Diamond Restaurant, Double Luck International Corp., Fiesta Resort & Spa, Gree Air Conditioner, Guangdong Hardware, Gourmet Restaurant, Hyatt, IT&E, I Love Saipan, Kevin Store, Luen Fung, Marpac, Modern Stationery, PIC, Pacific Subsea Submarine, Pearl River Co., Pretty Host, Pretty Market, Pretty Tour, Saipan Shipping, Subway, Sunleader, Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino, Transamerica Corp., Twins Super Market, Venus Beauty Salon, Wu Shun, and Yaong Corp.

Female student at the Chinese Education Center perform a dance number.
CLARISSA V. DAVID



The Marianas High School Glee Club Rhythm and Harmony sing Seasons of Love.
CLARISSA V. DAVID

MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND TRUST
PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, The Open Government Act of 1992, the Marianas Public Land Trust has scheduled a MPLT Trustees Special Meeting to be held on Wednesday, February 1, 2012 beginning at 9:30am at MPLT Conference Room, 1313 Anatahan Drive, Capital Hill, Saipan, MP 96950

The following agenda is hereby established:

I. PRELIMINARIES
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda

II. OLD BUSINESS
- IPS Review

III. MISCELLANEOUS
- Other Administrative Matters

IV. ADJOURNMENT

At anytime during this scheduled meeting, the Board of Trustees may be required to enter into Executive Session to discuss matters deemed privileged and confidential.

In accordance with Public Law 8-41, additional agenda items may be added to the above listing only by the recorded vote of the majority of the trustee governing body. All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written and oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/s/ Pedro R. Guerrero
Chairman, MPLT Trustees

Japan consulate assures continued presence in the CNMI

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Consular Office of Japan has assured that it will continue providing services for Japanese nationals residing or visiting the CNMI following a report about the possibility of the Philippine Consulate General closing down.

Japan Consul Tsutomu Higuchi said yesterday that their office, located on the second floor of the Bank of Hawaii building at the Marina Heights Business Park, has "not at all" considered shutting down and will remain open to their citizens.

"I'm not sure how the Japanese government would think but I haven't received any announcement or information from our office about shutting down our office," he said. "I'm sure our office will continue to be here."

The Consular Office of Japan, which has been operating on Saipan for over 30 years, is one of two foreign government offices in the CNMI. The other is the Philippine Consulate General on the fifth floor of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe.

Higuchi

Palau used to have a consulate on Saipan but it was closed down last year.

Philippine media reports state that the Consulate General on Saipan is among the 12 embassies and consulates that the Department of Foreign Affairs is thinking of closing down by the end of 2012 due to "rationalization" of resources.

Higuchi emphasized that the Consular Office of Japan does not only provide services to Japanese who reside in the Commonwealth but also to those who visit the islands as tourists.

He disclosed that their office has available data every October on the number of Japanese citizens residing in the CNMI. He said that as of October 2011, they have over 1,000 Japanese nationals in the Commonwealth—"there is not much difference" compared to 2010.

"Our community size is very small compared to the size of the Filipino community," noted Higuchi.

What it lacks in the number of residents is made up in the number of Japanese visitors. According to Higuchi, the CNMI hosts hundreds of thousands of Japanese visitors each year, with 2011 alone accommodating nearly 200,000 tourists from their country.

"We have to consider not only the number of residents here but also the number of tourists here. That's the big difference between the Japan and the Philippine [Consulates]," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Higuchi said they provide Japanese tourists with consular services that include issuance of passports as well as assistance and support to those tourists who become victims of crime.

"We have to protect, we have to give our services to tourists as well, that's why we'll continue to be here," he added. "We always try our best to support the Japanese residents and tourists at the same level."

Higuchi also disclosed that the number of foreign nationals who apply for a visa to travel to Japan has "slightly decreased."

"I think that's simply because they cannot travel without a parole, that's why they hesitate to go abroad," he said.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Acclaimed pianist performs on Tinian

Tinian Mayor Dela Cruz and the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino have teamed up to bring the acclaimed concert pianist Ramon Rudnytsky to Tinian for a special concert to be held at the Natibu Park Pavilion this evening, Tuesday, Jan. 31. The general public is welcome to attend this once in a lifetime opportunity. ***(PR)***

Courthouse schedule for February

Through the end of February 2012, CNMI courthouses on all three islands will be open with full operations except as noted below.

Saipan: Limited operation on Friday, Feb. 10, 2012. Only essential services of the Office of the Clerk of Court, the Office of Adult Probation Services, the Family Court Division, the Marshal Service Division, and Judicial Chambers will be provided.

Closed on: Monday, Feb. 20, 2012 (President's Day)

Rota: Closed on Monday, Feb. 6, 2012

Tinian: Closed on Monday, Feb. 20, 2012

The CNMI Judicial Council considers its hours of operation on a month-to-month basis. The Judicial Council will meet again on Feb. 15, 2012. The hours of operation for March will be released shortly after.

More information may be obtained by calling the Clerk of Court's office phone number, 236-9765 on Saipan, 433-3410 on Tinian and 532-9422 Rota, or by contacting the Supreme Court's Public Information Office at 236-9716. ***(PR)***

DEQ sets cleanup at Tank Beach on Saturday

The Division of Environmental Quality's cleanup brigade will be picking up trash at Tank Beach in Kagman, Saipan this Saturday, Feb. 4, 2012, at 8am.

If you would like to volunteer your time to clean and beautify our island, meet with the brigade at the Tank Beach parking lot. Volunteers will split into groups and clean until 10am and break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 monthly cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participated in at least three cleanups will receive a green brigade t-shirt.

The Jan. 7 cleanup at Laolao Bay was very successful with over 50 volunteers participating. Thanks to Hopwood's My Wave Club, Kagman High JROTC, Oleai Elementary School, Laolao Bay Golf, CUC, PRMI, MINA and other volunteers, 920 pounds of trash was removed from the beach and properly disposed of. D&Q provided refreshments.

DEQ is looking forward to a repeat success at Tank Beach this Saturday, so join DEQ's cleanup brigade and "Pick It Up!"

For more information about volunteering, contact the DEQ office at 664-8500/1. ***(DEQ)***

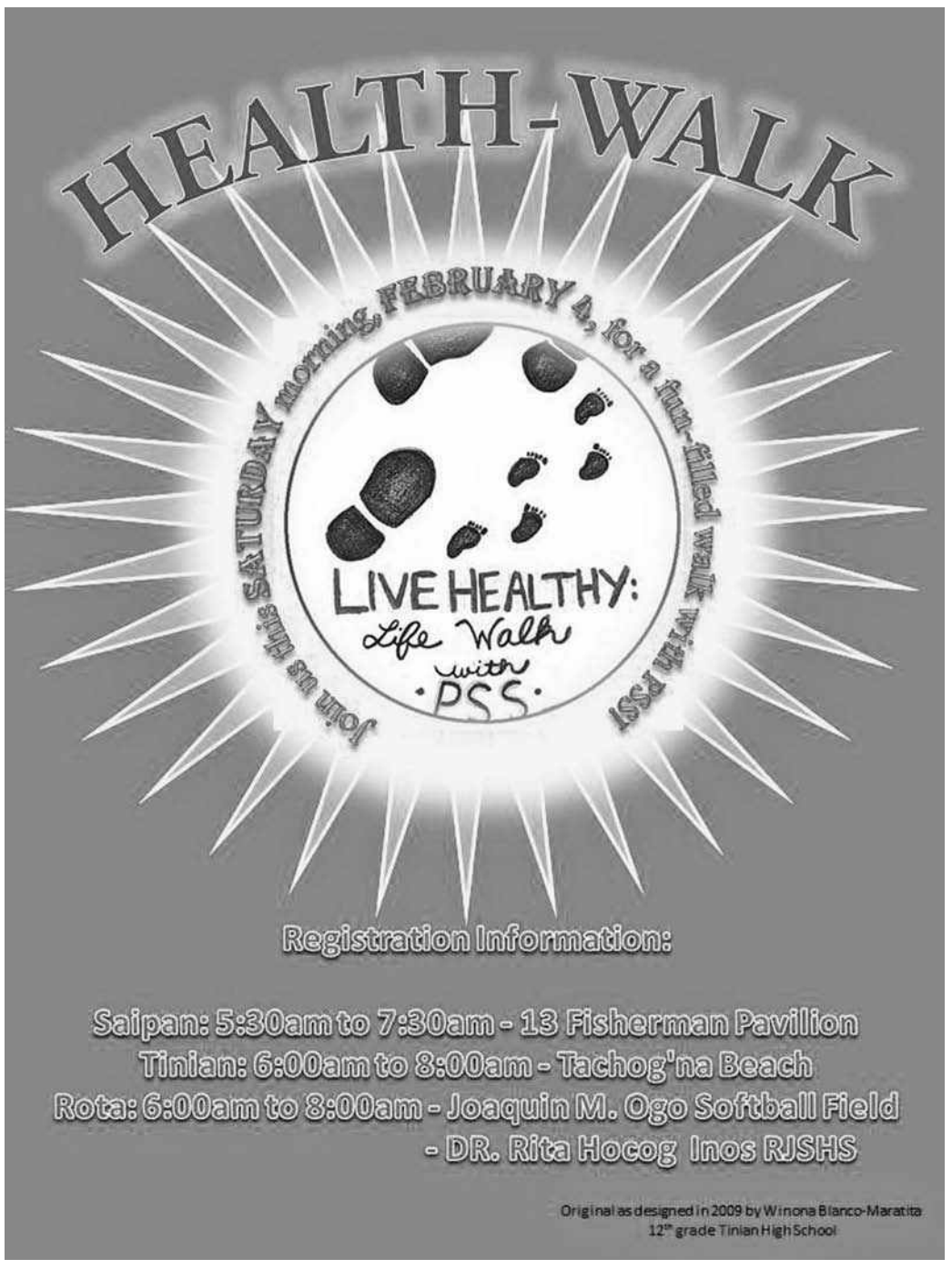
CCA thanks generous donors

The Commonwealth Cancer Association recently received major donations from two families. In December 2011 the family of the late Gerard Sablan donated $1,500 as well as a bedside commode. In January 2012, another family who wished to remain anonymous donated a hospital bed, a wheelchair, and bedside commode to CCA. Many thanks to these families for their generous contributions, which will go a long way toward helping CCA continue in its efforts to provide support services for residents battling cancer.

In 2011 CCA served more than 60 people with cancer in the CNMI—a 50-percent increase compared to 2010. Services include financial assistance for medical, nutritional, and therapeutic supplies; lending of medical equipment free of charge; monthly support meetings for survivors of cancer and their caregivers; and information/referrals to other programs.

CCA is a community-based nonprofit organization that advocates for a cancer-free CNMI through public education about cancer risk reduction and early detection, and provides support to cancer patients, survivors, and their families through community partnerships and programs.

For more information about CCA, call 682-0050 or email cca@ccamarianas.org. ***(PR)***


HEALTH-WALK
Join us this SATURDAY morning, FEBRUARY 4, for a fun-filled walk with PSS!
LIVE HEALTHY:
Life Walk
with
PSS
Registration Information:
Saipan: 5:30am to 7:30am - 13 Fisherman Pavilion
Tinian: 6:00am to 8:00am - Tachog'na Beach
Rota: 6:00am to 8:00am - Joaquin M. Ogo Softball Field
- DR. Rita Hocog Inos RJSHS
Original as designed in 2009 by Winona Blanco-Maratita
12th grade Tinian High School

COMMERCIAL SPACE FOR RENT

- **Beachside, Oleai:** Stand alone professional office / house-office or restaurant bar location along Beach Road, 1,800 sq. ft., with good parking, back up generator and beach access. Asking: $1,200/mo.
- **San Jose:** Former SDA Preschool building. Great location. Good condition with fenced yard. Asking: $1,000.00.

HOUSE FOR RENT

- **San Jose House:** 5-bedroom and 2-bathroom house in San Jose. Good location near Dolphin Wholesale and San Jose Mart. Asking: $1,000/mo.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

- **ANAKS Condominium:** 1 unit available. 2-Bedroom, 1 ½-Bathroom. Ocean view. Asking: $1,000/mo.

HOME FOR SALE

- **Sadog-Tasi:** Luxurious executive home, overlooking Managaha Island and Saipan lagoon. 2 storeys with 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms w/ large den & terrace. Beautiful garden & landscape. Call for details.

AVAILABLE LAND

- **Vacant land in Tinian:** Available for farming or development. Close to San Jose.
  - i. Lot 031 T 10: 13,118 sq.m. Asking: $5.00/sq.m.
  - ii. Lot 031 T 11: 13,123 sq.m. Asking: $5.00/sq.m.
  - iii. Lot 031 T 12: 1,054 sq.m. Asking: $5.00/sq.m.
  - iv. Lot 031 T 13: 1,048 sq.m. Asking: $5.00/sq.m.
  - v. Lot 114 T 14: 4,185 sq.m. Asking: $5.00/sq.m.
  - vi. Lot 114 T 05: 25,000 sq.m. Asking: $5.00/sq.m.
  - vii. Lot 102 T 21: 3,643 sq.m. Asking: $5.00/sq.m.
  - viii. Lot 118 T 04: 1,190 sq.m. Asking: $5.00/sq.m.
- **Vacant land in Capitol Hill:** 4,479 sq. m. available, zoned for residential purposes. Easement not presently open. Asking: $15.00/sq.m.
- **Vacant land in Lower Base:** 25,979 sq.m. available. Asking: $20.00/sq.m.
- **Vacant land on San Roque Beachfront:** Ideal for a small single house. Asking: $35,000.00.

Alexander Realty
Alexander Building, Beach Road San Jose, Saipan MP 96950
For inquiries please contact Alexander Realty at:
234-5117 or e-mail: roy.alexander@saipan.com
Website: www.realtysaipan.com

CNMI sea turtles: A shared resource

By TAMMY SUMMERS
NOAA CONTRACTOR

Why do we need to conserve turtles when we see so many in the waters surrounding our islands? This question is one of the most commonly asked of the DNLR-DFW Sea Turtle Program staff from within the CNMI community. Fortunately, with the assistance of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administrations Pacific Islands Regional Office, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, and the Southwest Fisheries Science Center Marine Turtle Genetics Lab, we are just beginning to formulate an answer to that question.

Scientific tools that help turtle researchers find clues to these answers include satellite telemetry and DNA analysis. This past nesting season, three adult female green turtles were satellite tagged and tracked after they finished laying their eggs on Saipan beaches.

What we learned from this experiment was that our turtle named Kumiko swam to Tagum Bay, the Philippines, another named Magas traveled to Miyakojima, Japan, and the third turtle Limwamway laid a total of nine nests before her tag stopped transmitting signals shortly after departing Saipan's near-shore waters. Saipan's sea turtles traveled distances of 1,485 to 1,516 miles in under two months time!

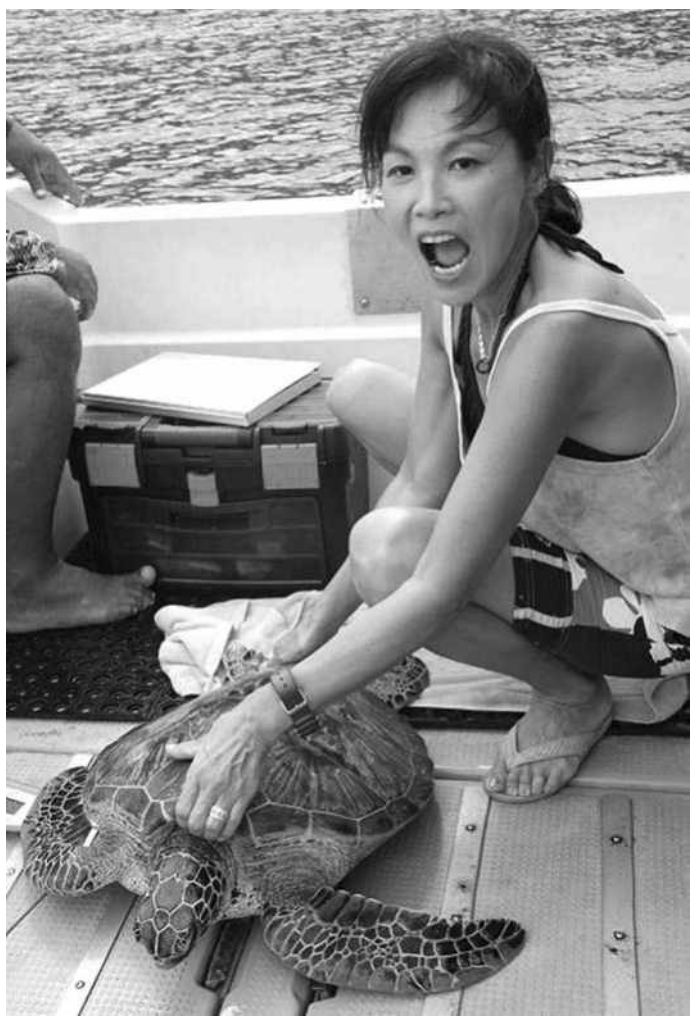
After five years of collecting skin tissue samples for DNA analysis from juvenile green and hawksbill turtles hand-captured in CNMI near-shore waters, preliminary lab results are showing that CNMI immature turtles are related to nesting populations found in the Marshall Islands and Yap State, Federated States of Micronesia, meaning that turtles found in CNMI waters appear to be part of a regional stock that uses waters in these Pacific Islands to forage. Genetically speaking, so far Saipan's nesting turtles (the ones you see on our beaches or mating along our shores) are related to populations in Guam, Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Melanesia, Taiwan, and Australia. However, some of these evolutionary relations may go back thousands of years.

Another common questions we're asked is: How old is that turtle? Because turtles have long life spans (upward of 85 years) it takes them until they are 20-35 years old (or 31 inches in shell length) to mature and begin reproducing. The average immature turtle that you may see eating, swimming, or resting around the CNMI islands, based on growth studies performed in Hawaii, is anywhere from 7 to 17 years in age depending on its size. The average length of green and hawksbill turtles captured and tagged in CNMI waters by DLNR-DFW is 20 inches long. Thus if we do the math, the turtles that we see floating around Saipan, Tinian, and Rota all need another 13 to 28 years to grow and mature before they then navigate back to the beaches where they were born to mate and nest. And according to DNA samples taken thus far, this is not on Saipan but the Marshall Islands or Yap State, FSM.

In addition, according to preliminary satellite tag transmission results, our nesting turtles are spending their inter-nesting periods (every 2-5 years) foraging (feeding) in Philippine and Japan near-shore waters.

Basically, the answer to the first question is: because the CNMI sea turtle population is a shared natural resource. Simply put, the teenage turtles we see foraging on our reefs do not nest on CNMI beaches and the adult turtles we see nesting on our beaches do not stay on our reefs. Therefore, we not only need to protect and conserve turtles here in the CNMI if we want our children to be able to enjoy them in the future, but we also must depend on fellow Pacific Islanders to do the same with the turtles we share with them for a part of their long and well-traveled life histories.

Report sea turtle poaching activities by calling the CNMI DFW Enforcement hotline at 670 888-4917, the NOAA Enforcement hotline at 671-472-7200, the Crime Stoppers hotline at 323-PARA, or 911.



LYNNE MICHAEL

In this file photo, a surprised Kumiko Furokawa volunteers to help CNMI DLNR staff during nearshore surveys of sea turtles on Rota.

Ex-soldier behind Papua New Guinea mutiny arrested

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (AP)—A retired colonel who attempted to take over Papua New Guinea's military and ordered the prime minister to step down has been arrested and charged with mutiny.

Police spokesman Dominic Kakas said Yaura Sasa was arrested Saturday night in a suburb of Port Moresby, the capital. A court spokesman said Sasa was charged with mutiny and appeared in court Sunday.

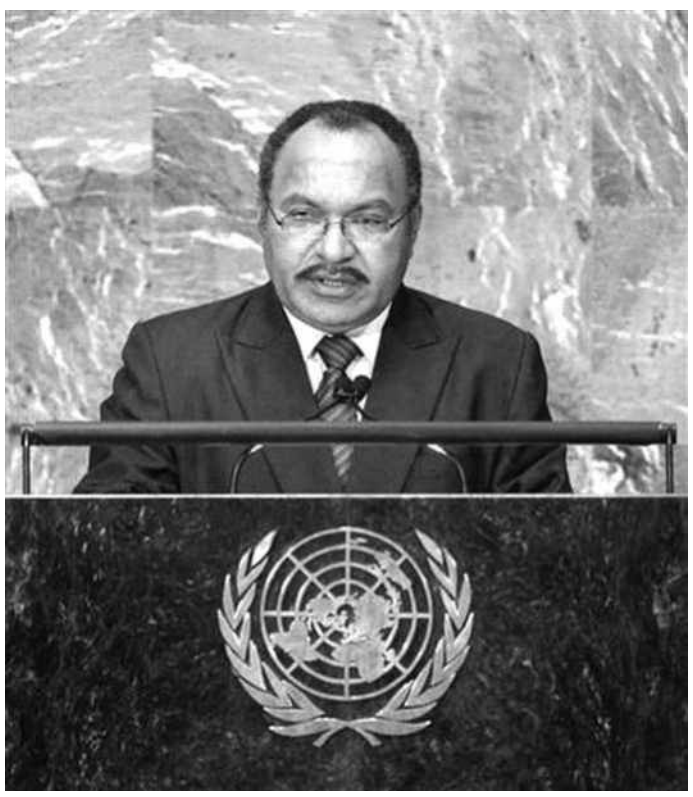
Sasa led a small group of soldiers in a mutiny Thursday in which the military's top commander was briefly held under house arrest. The mutiny was part of a power struggle in which Prime Minister Peter O'Neill and former Prime Minister Michael Somare claim to be the rightful leader of the South Pacific nation.

Sasa demanded that O'Neill step down within a week to make way for Somare, who appointed Sasa defense chief after being removed from office.

Kakas said the soldiers who followed Sasa had not been arrested.

Parliament replaced Somare with O'Neill in August while Somare was getting medical treatment outside the country. Papua New Guinea's Supreme Court sided with Somare last month, but O'Neill continues to have support from lawmakers.

Somare issued a statement Sunday repeating his call to be reinstated, and calling on police and the military to join him.



AP

In this Sept. 24, 2011 file photo, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea Peter O'Neill addresses the 66th session of the United Nations General Assembly at U.N. headquarters in New York.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Belated happy, happy birthday going out to a sweet, amazing, darling, precious girl who just celebrated her 3rd birthday, Aidin "Junie Bug" Benavente-Tagabuel! May you be blessed with many more birthdays to come! We love you! Greetings come from Mommy, Daddy, Dot, Aunty Sewa, Grandma, Grandpa, Uncle Jeremiah, Aunty Eun, Uncle David, Aunty Chinelle, and Nino Charisma!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 31, 2000

Gov't tightens entry of balut, salted eggs

If you're planning to import balut and salted eggs in large quantity from the Philippines, then you better think twice. The Department of Lands and Natural Resources has recently imposed a new regulation limiting the number of balut and salted eggs that can be brought from the Philippines or other Asian countries. Each passenger can bring in only 12 baluts and 12 salted eggs. According to Dr. Ignacio Dela Cruz, CNMI veterinarian, the restriction was primarily due to lack of manpower and equipment in the Quarantine Division to inspect huge quantities of these eggs, which is meant to prevent the entry of hatching or viable eggs that may become the potential source of new diseases.

DEQ's campaign targets hotels, construction firms

The Division of Environmental Quality is targeting hotels, garment factories and construction firms, which are mostly using generators in their operation, in its information drive this year on proper disposal of used oil. As a regulatory agency, DEQ's concern is focused on ensuring sure that the various businesses are following the proper disposal of used oil since the CNMI lacks the recycling facility. According to Ray Masga, DEQ environmental planner, the agency's concern is now focused in teaching the employees in these establishments how to dispose of the used oil.

Jan. 31, 2001

OPA: Insurance firm padded bills

The NMI Retirement Fund lost an estimated $313,516 on fraudulent claims and over $500,000 in supported claims due to padded bills of physical therapy services rendered by Megaplus International CNMI, Inc. Based on the result of the audit investigation of health insurance payments to Megaplus International, the Office of the Public Auditor disclosed that NMIRF through its Group Health and Life Insurance Branch paid the company over $800,000 on fraudulent health insurance claims of physical therapy services. Public Auditor Mike S. Sablan asked Fund Administrator Juan S. Torres to expedite the hiring of the review utilization board to prevent possible recurrence of this type of problem and the immediate preparation of guidelines for the review and processing of claims.

DPH: Flexible terms for indigent patients

The Department of Public Health yesterday disclosed the implementation of its Medically Indigent Assistance Plan to ensure the delivery of essential medical and health services to patients who do not have the capability to pay for them on one-time basis. The program helps patients pay medical services through the sliding fee scale program. According to Public Health Secretary Kevin P. Villagomez, the program is a schedule of discounts that would allow patients to pay a percentage of their bill depending on their financial ability. Villagomez explained that MIAP is part of the mission of the health department to provide quality medical care to residents of Northern Marianas regardless of their financial capacity.

Jan. 31, 2002

CSC, Babauta may go to court

Should Gov. Juan N. Babauta insist in his appointment of Frank Taitano as director of the Division of Customs, the Civil Service Commission has the option of bringing the matter to the court to prevent Taitano's assumption. At the same time, the present director of the customs division, Jose Mafnas, may himself take the matter to court and sue the CNMI government for violation of the Civil Service Act. Commission Board Chair Vicente M. Sablan pointed these out, even as he stressed that, as far as the Commission and the Office of Personnel Management is concerned, Mafnas is still the legitimate director of the customs division.

Govt leaders try to stem revenue hemorrhage

Scrambling to stem the continued hemorrhage in the Commonwealth's coffers, executive and legislative leaders met yesterday morning to map out strategies that would not only halt the revenue plunge but would also pump up the government's efforts to generate more income. Both leaderships of the House of Representatives and the Senate met separately and reviewed the talking points outlined in the CNMI Fiscal Outlook Report that was prepared by the Office of the Governor, to see which were implementable and which were not.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LAND EXCHANGE

In accordance with Public Law 5-33, Section 4(b) (3) the Public Purpose Land Exchange Authorization Act, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to enter into an exchange agreement to certain public lands in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the exchange of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 5-33, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

i. The purposed of the land exchange is to acquire a private property for public purpose. The private property is described as TR 21897-4R/W, containing an area of 1,683 square meters, more or less, situated in Takpochao, Saipan.

ii. The public land to be exchange is described as Lot 052 L 01, containing an area of 5,923 square meters more or less, located in Obyan, Saipan.

iii. The private property is owned by Ms. Benedicta C. Tenorio a resident of Saipan.

iv. A copy of the proposed land exchange agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan.

v. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before February 29, 2012 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

NOTISIA POT MAPROPONEN MA´ATULAKAN TANO´ PUBLIKU

Sigun gi halom I Lai Publiku 5-33 Seksiona 4 (b)(3), Public Purpose Land Exchange Act, I Depattamenton I Tano' Publiku guini ha nå´i notisia i intension-ña para u ma´atulaikan pumalu na tano´ publiku siha gi halom Saipan, Commonwealth gi Sangkattan Na Islan Marianas siha. Maseha håyi manentiresåo na petsona siha gi halom I publiku heneråsiña munna´hålom infotmasion, opiñon, pat testamonion kinentra gi tinahguen i propositu siha para I uma´atulaikan I tano´ publiku. Komu mås mapribeniyi ginen Lai Publiku 5-33, pettanesen infotmasion ni dinimånda na para u mapuplika.

i. I maproponen i ma´atulaikan tano´ para uma´chule I tano´ private para uson publiku. I diskripsion I tineteka na tano´ komo TR 21897-4R/W, kinensisiste i åria 1,683 na dinankulon tano, potlumenus mås, gaige giya Takpochao, Saipan.

ii. I diskripsion i tano´ publiku Lot 052 L 01, kinensisite i åria 5,923 square meters, potlumenus må, gaige giya Obyan, Saipan.

iii. I dwennon tano´ si Sinora Benedicta C. Tenorio, residente Saipan.

iv. I kopian a maproponen i ma´atulaikan tano´ siña machule´ gi ofisinan Dipattamenton Tano´ Publiku, gaige gi sigundo bibienda gi as Joeten Dandan Commercial Building giya Dandan, Saipan.

v. I Secretarian i Depattamenton Tano´ Publiku para hu aksepta I tinigi´i opiñon, pat testamonion kinentra gi tinahguen i mapropone na ma´atulakan tano´ publiku antes osino gi dia Febreru 29, 2012 gi Depattamenton Tano´.

ARONGORONG REEL POMWOL SIIWELIL FALÚWEER TOULAP

Sángi Alléghúl Toulap 5-33 Section 4 (b)(3), Bwulasiyool Ammwlil Falúweer Toulap ekke atotoowow ammataf igha ebwe siiwel eghús falúw mellól Seipél, Commonwealth Téél Falúwasch Marianas. Schóóka eyoor máfiyeer rebwe isisilong aghighiir, aweewe, aingiingi reel pomwol siiwel yeel. Alléghú Toulap ye 5-3 Section 4 (b)(3) e ayoora, lamal aweewe kka rebwe mweiti ngáli milikka ebwe akkatéélo.

i. Pomwol siiwelil falúweer toulap nge ekke bwáári TR 21897-4R/W, eyoor ruwabwúghúw eliigh me eew (1,683 square meters), elapeló me ngáre eghús, elo Takpochao. Tilighial buley yeel nge, eyoor mereel Bwulasiyool Falúweer Toulap ngáre óubwe ghuley fischey.

ii. Falúweer toulap yeel nge Lot 052 L 01, eyoor ruwabwúghúw eliigh me eew 5,923 lapel falúw ye, elo Obyan, Seipél.

iii. Ms. Benedicta C. Tenorio elollo , Seipél, yaal falúw ye ebwe siiwel ngale falúweer toulap.

iv. Tilghial siiwel yeel nge emmwel óubwe bwughi mereel mwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap, elo aruwowal (2nd floor) me Joeten Dandan Commercial Building loll Tuturam, Seipel.

v. Samwoolul Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge ebwe bwughil ischil mángemáng, aingiingil mereel amweyút mmwal Mââischigh 29, 2012, mellól Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap iye elo Seipé.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE OF PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to lease certain public lands in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

i. The proposed lease of public land is described as Lot No. 237 E 02, containing an area of approximately 5,751 square meters, more or less, situated in Lower Base, Saipan. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands for inspection.

ii. The prospective lessee is Marianas Meat Harvesting Corporation. The Directors of the Corporation are Mr. Joseph Borja, Mr. Anthony Pellegrino, and Mr. Paul Zak.

The Officers of the Corporation area Mr. Joseph Borja – President, Mr. Anthony Pellegrino – Treasurer, and Mr. Paul Zak – Secretary / Vice President.

iii. The proposed lease was negotiated by Mr. Joseph Borja and Mr. Anthony Pellegrino.

iv. The lessee shall use the premises solely for the purpose of developing and operating a USDA certified meat slaughtering facility and related activities.

The term of the proposed lease agreement is 25 years, with an option to extend the lease for an additional 15 years. The proposed annual rental during the term is based on a percentage of the appraised fair market value of the property.

v. A copy of the proposed lease agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; Songsong Village, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.

vi. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public land in Lower, Saipan.

vii. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before February 14, 2012 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

NUTISIA PUT MAPROPONIN ATKILON TÅNU' PUPBLIKU

Sigun gi Seksiona 106(b) gi Lain Pupbliku 15-2, i Dipattamentun Tånu' Pupbliku guini ha nå'i nutisia ni intension-ña para u mana'ma'atkila pumalu na tånu' pupbliku siha giya Saipan, Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Islas Marianas siha. Maseha håyi na pattida siha gi halum i pupbliku heneråt siña ha na'hålum i imfotmasion, opiñon, pat testamoñun kinentra siha gi tinahguin propositu siha ni para i atkilon tånu' pupbliku. Sigi mås mo'na mapribeniyi ginin i Lain Pupbliku 15-2, i tinattitiyi pettanesin imfotmasion ni madimånda ni debi na u mapupblika.

i. I maproponi na atkilon tånu' pupbliku ha diskribi kumu Lot No. 237 E 02, ni kinonsisti åria kåsi guaha 5,751 square meters, mås pat menus, ni gaigi giya Lower Base, Saipan. I kopian i lugåt gaigi gi pumalu na gumuaha gi Dipattamentun Tånu' Pupbliku siha ni para i rikunosimientu.

ii. I manatkikila i Marianas Meat Harvesting Corporation . I Direktot i Corporation siha si Siñot Joseph Borja, Siñot Anthony Pellegrino, yan si Siñot Paul Zak.

I Ufisiålis siha gi årian Corporation si Siñot Joseph Borja – Presidenti , si Siñot Anthony Pellegrino - i Tresureru, yan si Siñot Paul Zak - Sekritåriu /Sigundu Presidenti.

iii. I maproponi na atkilon manigosiu gi as Siñot Joseph Borja yan Siñot Anthony Pellegrino.

iv. I manatkikila debi na u usa i lugåt solamienti para hinangai developing yan operating i fasilidåt i USDA certified meat slaughtering yan i mana'achuli' na aktibidåt siha.

I teman i maproponi na kuntråtan atkilon sa' 25 åñus, yan option para u ma'ekstendi i atkilon gi ta'lu 15 åñus.

I maproponi na åpas atkilon gi sakkan gi durântin i tema sigun gi percentage gi appraised fair market value gi propiedåt, ingklusu i prisenti na estroktura.

v. Kopian i manmaproponi na kontråtan atkilon siña machuli' gi ufisinan i Dipattamentun Tånu' Pupbliku siha, gaigi gi sigundu bibienda 2nd floor gi Joeten Dandan Commercial Building giya Dandan, Saipan; gi Songsong Village, Luta; pat i primet 1st bibienda gi Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.

vi. I Dipattamentun Tanu' Pupbliku siha tåya' na ha risibi tinahguin propositu siha para sinuhetun atkilon tanu' pupbliku siha giya Lower Base, Saipan.

vii. I Sekritåriun i Dipattamentun Tanu' Pupbliku siha debi na u aksepta i tinigi' i imfotmasion, opiñon yan testamoñun kinentra pat tinahguin propositu siha ginin i manggai interes na pattida siha gi pat åntis di Fibreru 14, 2012 gi ufisinan Dipattamentun Tånu' Pupbliku siha ni gaigi Saipan, Luta, pat Tinian.

ARONGORONG REEL POMWOL AKKILONUL FALÚWEER TOULAP

Sángi Tálil ye 106(b) mellól Alléghul Toulap 15-2, Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap, ekke atotoowow ammataf igha ebwe akkilaaló eghús falúw mellól Seipel, Commonwealth Téél Falúwasch Marianas. Schóókka remuschál emwal rebwe isisilong yaar mángemáng, data awewee, me angiingi reel pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap. Sengi Alléghul Toulap ye 15-2, ebwal ayoora, lamal awewee kka rebwe mweiti ngáli milikka ebwe akkatéélo.

i. Pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap nge ekke bwáári Lot No. 237 E. 02, eyoor Limwoow Sangaras, Fisabwughúw limeigh me eew laapal(5,751 square meters) elapeló me ngáre eghús, elo Lower Base, Seipel. Tilighial bwuley yeel nge eyoor mereel Bwulasiyool Falúweer Toulap(Public Lands) ngáre óubwe ghuley fischiy.

ii. Schéschéél schóól akkilón nge Marianas Meat Harvesting Corporation. Direkktoodol Corporation yel nge Mr. Joseph Borja, Mr. Anthony Pellegrino me Mr. Paul Zak.

Schóól officers il Corporation yel nge Mr. Joseph Borja-President, Mr. Anthony Pellegrino-Treasurer, me Mr. Paul Zak-Secretary/Vice President

iii. Schóól aweweey akkilon yel nge Mr. Joseph Borja me Mr. Anthony Pellegrino

iv. Schóól akkilon ebwe yááyá falúw yeel rel ebwe ayoora me angaanga eew leliyal lil maal iye USDA certified me bwal akkaw mwóghutughut.

Tool aighúghúl pomwol akkilon nge reweigh me limoow ráágh (25 years). Emmwel rebwe bwal sóóbwey ngáli seigh me limoow ráágh (15 years).

Pomwol méél akkilon nge ebwe mwiril sángi percentage il yaal appraised fair market value il falúw.

v. Tilighial akkilon yeel nge emmwel óubwe bwughi merel bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap, elo aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) me Joeten Dandan Commercial Building llól Tuturam, Seipél; Songsong village, Luuta; me ngáre mmwal pwó (1st floor) mellól Kings Commercial Building, Tchúlúyól.

vi. Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge esáál bweibwogh mwo pomwol akkilon ye elo Lower Base, Seipél.

vii. Samwoolul Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge ebwe bwughi ischil mángemáng, aingiingil merel amweyút mmwal Febrero 14, 2012 mellól Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap iye elo Seipél, Luuta, ngare Tchúlúyól.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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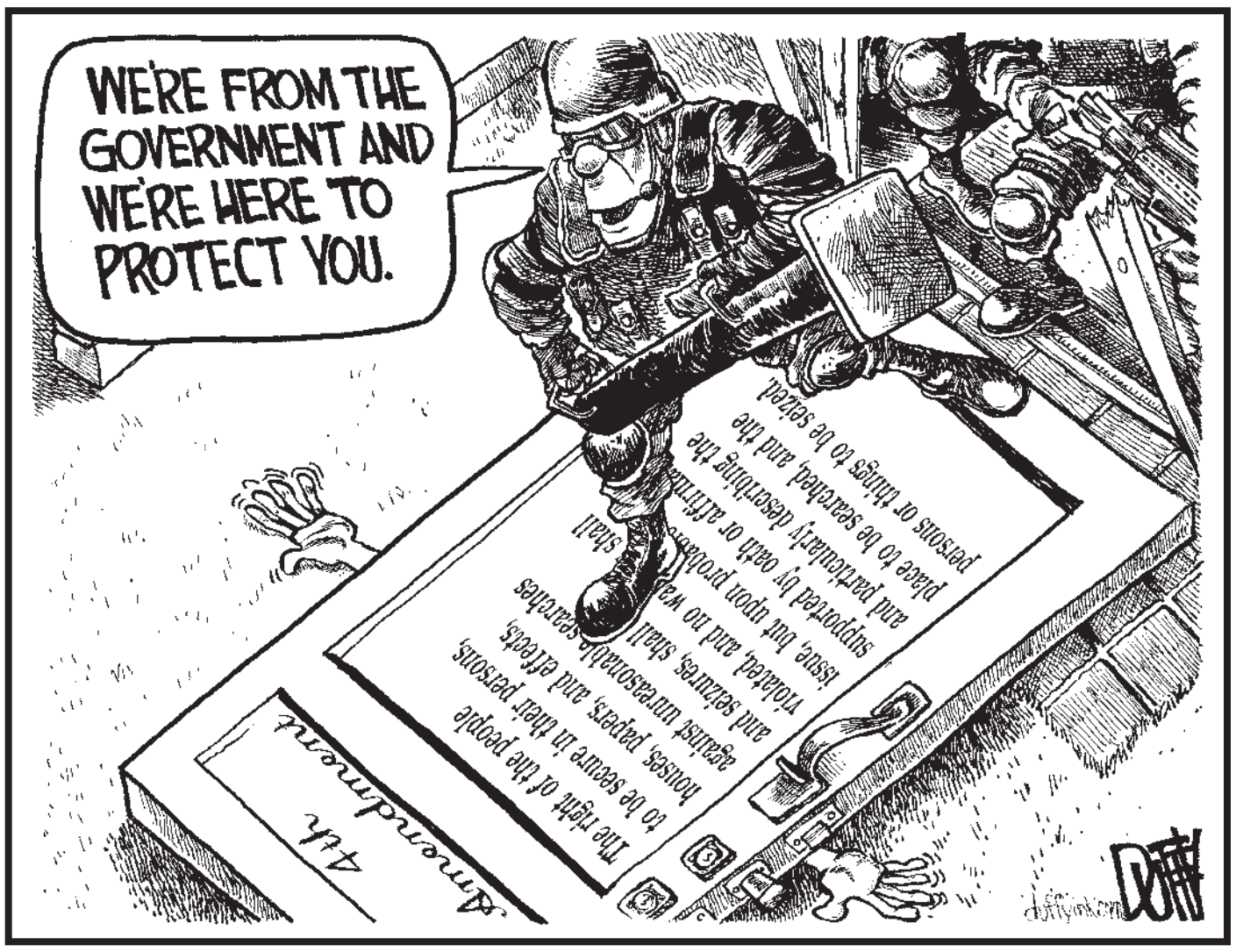

WE'RE FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND WE'RE HERE TO PROTECT YOU.
4th Amendment
The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated and no warrants issue but upon probable cause supported by oath or affirmation and particularly describing the place to be searched and the persons or things to be seized.

Our leaders, not Colbert, made the mockery

By DICK POLMAN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Dick Polman is a columnist for the Philadelphia Inquirer*. Readers may write to him at: Philadelphia Inquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at dpolman@phillynews.com; blog: http://www.dickpolman.blogspot.com.*

Mark Twain once remarked, "Humor is the great thing, the saving thing. The minute it crops up, all our irritations and resentments slip away, and a sunny spirit takes their place."

No dose of humor could leave us feeling sunny about a slimy Republican campaign that's awash in unprecedented cash, thanks to a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that has rendered the process farcical. But Twain rightfully suggests it's mentally healthy to laugh at life's idiocies, that humor can tamp down irritations if we view them through the prism of farce.

Which is why Stephen Colbert, a latter-day Twain and mock presidential candidate, is so valuable these days. Absurdism may be the only effective way to expose the absurdities of campaign finance laws. The laws have become so ludicrous that they require a satirist to unpack them in the pursuit of truth (or, as he calls it, "truthiness").

Colbert owes the existence of his Super PAC—which is actually not his; it's called The Definitely Not Coordinated with Stephen Colbert Super PAC—to the 2010 high court decision that licensed the flood of endless (and often anonymous) big money into presidential campaigns. The court said the money could be pumped unchecked into "independent" groups—Super PACs—as long as they don't coordinate with candidates. The court insisted that Super PAC donations "do not give rise to corruption, or the appearance of corruption."

How naive. For months, the airwaves in early primary states have been corrupted by tens of millions of dollars worth of lies, in 30-second salvos, by groups such as Restore Our Future (a pro-Romney PAC) and Winning Our Future (a pro-Gingrich PAC). Winning is airing a Florida ad calling Romney "the inventor of government-run health care," which is nuts, because the Massachusetts plan is not government-run.

Winning is run by close Gingrich allies, just as Restore is run by close Romney allies. They don't need to "coordinate," because they know what the candidates want. Indeed, Gingrich's candidacy might well be on fumes today if not for Winning. And Winning would be on fumes if not for one Vegas mogul (Newt pal Sheldon Adelson) who's racking up record profits from his Macao casino. The satire writes itself.

Colbert wants to obey the law. He originally christened his PAC with the name Americans for a Better Tomorrow, Tomorrow, but after receiving deadpan on-air advice from a real federal elections expert, attorney Trevor Potter, he changed the PAC name and brought his buddy John Stewart to run it and non-coordinate it. After the ceremonial transfer, Stewart's group actually aired an ad in South Carolina, going negative on Romney in the new Super PAC tradition. To wit: Since Romney believes corporations are people, and since Bain Capital has killed corporations, doesn't that make Romney a serial killer?

When Colbert was questioned on ABC News about the ad, he deadpanned: "I don't want any untrue ads on the air that could in any way be traced to me. I don't know if Mitt Romney is a serial killer. That's a question he's going to have to answer."

See LEADERS on Next Page

Women's bodies—from Eden to a garden

By GINA BARRECA
The Hartford Courant

Gina Barreca is an English professor at the University of Connecticut, a feminist scholar who has written eight books, and a columnist for the Hartford Courant*. She can be reached through her website at http://www.ginabarreca.com.*

From age 16 to age 20, a woman's body is a temple. From 21 to 45, it's an amusement park. From 45 on, it's a terrarium.

I know this because every morning I now take a capsule with 4.6 billion strains of supposedly beneficial flora to help establish the equilibrium in my digestive tract. There are only 7 billion people on the planet. Every morning I'm swallowing half my own universe.

And I'm not the only one. Every person I meet who is even in the least bit neurotic about his or her—it's usually her—intestinal issues takes some version of a probiotic. I didn't know what a probiotic was until a year ago but now it's emerged, right alongside philosophy, politics and the latest "Mob Wives" mauling, as a central topic of discussion.

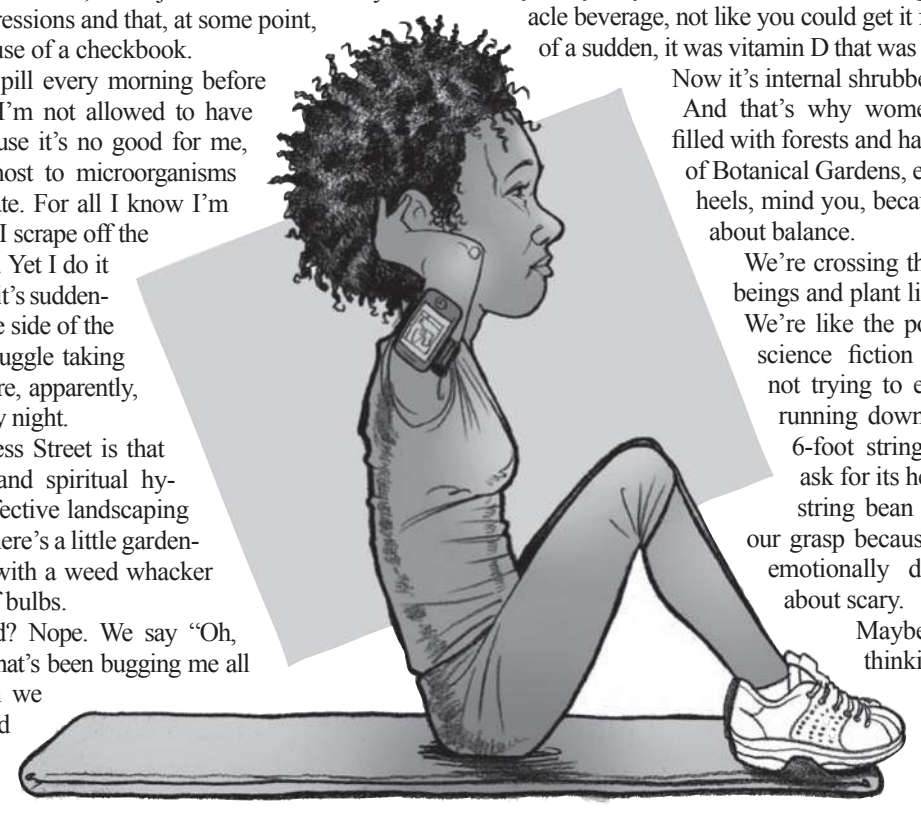
I take a pill, and I have no idea what's in it. I've tried to learn; I read the small print. But I don't get the explanation. It doesn't help that the people explaining it are usually the same ones who have attempted to explain how derivatives function in economic terms. My role is to stand in front of them as they deliver earnest and passionate speeches until my eyes glaze over and I start to wobble.

Indeed, I believe some of the same people who once sold derivatives are now selling probiotics, but it just could be that they have similar facial expressions and that, at some point, I'm expected to make use of a checkbook.

Anyway, I take this pill every morning before my first sip of decaf. I'm not allowed to have caffeine anymore because it's no good for me, whereas becoming a host to microorganisms is something to celebrate. For all I know I'm ingesting the very stuff I scrape off the tiles in my shower stall. Yet I do it because I'm convinced it's suddenly imperative I assist the side of the righteousness in the struggle taking place in my colon where, apparently, ignorant armies clash by night.

The word on Wellness Street is that our mental, physical and spiritual hygiene hinges on the effective landscaping of our tummies. As if there's a little gardener in there, some guy with a weed whacker and a couple of bags of bulbs.

Do we find this odd? Nope. We say "Oh, good! At last I know what's been bugging me all these years!" And then we buy specially formulated yogurt advertised by a well-known actress who looks like a fun, regular person. With the emphasis on regular.



Human beings are always searching for some part of our body to blame. In the 15th century, you could go to a healer who used leeches, holy water and spiders to cure you. If the patient lived, he gave the healer a pound of goat meat; if he died, the healer was burnt to death as a witch. This is why, even today, doctors prefer malpractice insurance to its alternatives.

In our lifetimes, the quick fixes have changed rapidly. Once upon a time it was iron we all lacked; people took Geritol (remember the ad saying "My wife—I think I'll keep her"?). Then it was water. Suddenly everybody in America was discovering water like it was a miracle beverage, not like you could get it from a hydrant. Then all of a sudden, it was vitamin D that was going to save us.

Now it's internal shrubbery.

And that's why women are taking capsules filled with forests and have turned into a version of Botanical Gardens, except in heels. Sensible heels, mind you, because everything in life is about balance.

We're crossing the border where human beings and plant life meet. We're hybrids. We're like the pod people in those bad science fiction movies except we're not trying to escape; this time we're running down the street chasing the 6-foot string bean so that we can ask for its help with our colitis. The string bean is attempting to evade our grasp because we're too needy and emotionally dependent on it. Talk about scary.

Maybe we should go back to thinking about our bodies as temples. There could be offerings. I'd like pepperoni and extra cheese on mine.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Olympic effort at SVES

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergarajr2031@aol.com) is a former PSS teacher and is currently writing from the campus of Shenyang Aerospace University in China.

"Solar City Tower," proposed for the island of Cotonduba situated at the mouth of the bay east of Rio de Janeiro, may be the welcome symbol and point of reference to the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio. It would be the first sight for arriving visitors and participants by air and water.

The tower captures solar energy to supply all of the Olympic City and pumps up water from the ocean to create a waterfall that will run turbines that produce energy, including the eternal fires of the Olympic flame.

We notice this even before the London Olympiad 2012 completes greening a previously dilapidated brownsville to underscore the change in our relationship to the future. Where Alvin Toffler previously identified our anxious experience of what is ahead in Future Shock, the challenges of tomorrow is increasingly becoming the logistical structures of today.

The London Olympiad met the challenge of real estate development and transformed an old industrial site on the East End of London into a more humane venue for public and private housing after its role as the Olympic Village this year. (For a brief moment in our wanderings, we did manage to hear the sheer glee out of Rio's Copacabana, and breath the dusty decline of East End London.)

We witnessed what Shanghai did with the International Expo when it invited the world to showcase national efforts in humanizing urban dwellings and lifestyles, as 50 percent of the traditionally agrarian make-up of China had moved into the urban centers.

I remember the warehouse ambience of the two rooms I occupied at SVES where teachers put up images of their whole-year curriculum on the walls of the classroom, including the window panes since the rooms were air-conditioned; student learning was classroom confined where they read, listened, and memorized to pass standard tests.

We changed the pedagogy in our room, opened the windows and allowed natural light to shine. Preferring the coolness of natural air breezing into the class, we ran into the then SVES culture of imposed academic silence; our class sang songs, encouraged laughter, promoted the banter of open discourse, and repeated loud salutations. We proved to be a distraction to the neighboring classes.

We found the single air-conditioning unit distracting when it failed running at max capacity long past its warranty, abused rather than maintained tending to dysfunction. So we got StuCo funds to get us a second unit, ran them at normal capacity, with minimal breakdown disruptions when one coughed itself into repairs.

Guest worker Cris Lumanlan put wheels on our bookshelves and cabinets, turning and extending the ambience of our classroom to designs of our choice; the room center became the focus of the class away from the green board and the teacher. Student learning was our concern, and PSS' Student First slogan was our delight.

When PSS installed flat screens and WiFi, our Science class watched BBC Attenborough's award winning Blue Planet, of land and the oceans, fauna and flora of Gaia's continents, instead of just burying one's nose on a textbook.

Our memory and recollection was jarred when we finally viewed the YouTube show of Rob Stewart's Sharkwater Saipan story where the CNMI banned the capture and possession of sharks in its sovereign territory. SVES teacher Kathy Pagapular-Ruszala and her 6th Grade class were shown in the SVES classroom I occupied, going one long mile further in actually aiding Diego's effort to legislate the ban on shark finning, supported by Cinta and, presumably, her Carolinian network, and researching the sale of shark fin soup in Saipan restaurants. Wow, an effort worthy of a nomination for a Benchley Youth Activism award!

Which brings us back to building the future now, not from anxiety but from gracious resolve. That is what the Solar Tower of Rio and the Olympic East End village of London signify, our Shanghai Expositions on the Pudong side glorify, and now, the glocal teacher and her students in San Vicente Elementary School exemplify. The myriad of efforts and opportunities in making our planet green is inexhaustible. They also attest to a sustainable future NOW!

The audacity of hope is not just Obama's catchy title to his book. It is an invitation NOW to transcend and transform our anxieties of inadequacy and insecurity into the immanent and transparent confidence that the journey from womb to tomb is and has always been a celebration of creativity that knows no bounds.

From the top, we can transform Military Defense to the Department of Peace, a sword-to-ploughshare mindset.

From the local level, mayhap Kaipat and Olopai, Sablan and Tenorio, Rayphand and Thornburgh, Borja and Cruz, and all other walking and awake humans, heed and proclaim the admonition of one carpenter from the ancient hills of the Levant who intoned: "You want to be well? Well, why not pick up your life, and walk?" No guarantees, warranties, and certitudes; only the invitation to freely choose the destiny of our lives!

Are we standing tall this day? Everything else follows our fundamental answer. Looks like the SVES kids joined today's Olympiad of the land, the waters, and the soul. How about you?

Collaborative advocacy

By JIM RAYPHAND
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jim Rayphand is the executive director of the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc.

Advocacy at the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc. is something of a paradox, treading a fine line between a hammer and the delicate tongue of diplomacy—ever looking for the sweet spot between our statutory standing and personal finesse. Maybe it's our small-town beings, but experience has shown that it's the positive relationships we develop with people that open doors for us and for the people with disabilities we represent. It's taken a fair share of hammering, yelling matches, and high blood pressures to come to this conclusion, but we're comfortable in saying that we achieve desired outcomes far more expeditiously and with greater satisfaction through collaborative advocacy.

That said, working collaboratively is not synonymous with turning a blind eye, shying away from the hard questions, or conceding our rights and the rights of our clients to appease anyone, much less the curmudgeon, little personalities we come across on occasion. You know the ones who seem to hurt when they smile and stutter at the thought of a kind word. Obstructionists who can say in one breath that they "are not inclined to participate in any further conversation…and will not be agreeing to meet with you…but look forward to continued positive relations"—a true-life quote. The thing about relying on diplomacy is that in one fell swoop, the stacks and years of relational building blocks can crash down around us—not that the hammer is soft, mind you, but our finesse is shaken and egos are a little worse for the wear.

By and large, the majority of people we come across want to work with us, but others feel slighted just by our mere presence—maybe we look at them cross-eyed or don't beat around bush enough, so often the lines of communication get shut down long before we can even say hello. Our attempts at diplomacy fall short and then it's a turf war. Inevitably our "access authority" comes into question and like a bad episode of Groundhog Day, we go back to dusting off the same, worn-out pages of our federal statutes—the Hammer, if you will—one of which requires that we "protect and advocate for the rights of individuals with developmental disabilities" [42 USC §15043 (a)(1)] and the federal regulations which mandate that our office shall, among other things—

have reasonable unaccompanied access to public and private facilities which provide services, supports, and other assistance for individuals with developmental disabilities in the state when necessary to conduct a full investigation of an incident of abuse or neglect [42 CFR 1386.22(f)];

have unaccompanied access to all residents of a facility at reasonable times, which at a minimum shall include normal working hours and visiting hours (emphasis added) [42 CFR 1386.22(g)]

Admittedly, it is somewhat unique to have a relatively tiny-eyed, non-profit organization with governmental, oversight authority, but such is the case. Still, as a matter of policy, NMPASI remains partial to the course of least resistance—we'll work with just about anyone to achieve our primary mission "to protect the civil, legal and human interests of individuals with disabilities." We can do great things on behalf of our people with disabilities and, subsequently, for the community at large—Nge inamwo schagh igha mesemwal u se su ghii asamal iimomw nge u bwe sughi asamal bwulomw... faischo [It's OK if, at first, you don't open the doors to your house, so long as you open the doors to your heart…respectfully].

For more on Protection & Advocacy Systems, contact the NMPASI Office at (670) 235-7273/4 [tel] / 235-7275 [fax] / 235-7278 [tty] or online at www.nmpasi.org.

Letters to the Editor

Not the golf courses

The idea to sell our land to investors is okay but not the golf courses please. I think the government should look into the idea of doing a joint venture with the present operators and sell a lifetime membership. By doing this, we will attract golfers as repeaters, the government can still collect its intended amount of cash or even more and the best part is, we do not lose control over the land and can still maintain or provide our people the benefit to enjoy local discount privileges. Otherwise, local golfers can kiss their golf sets goodbye since it will not be affordable to play anymore. Only the elite will probably play once in a while. Think about it! By the way, I noticed that majority of our leaders are sold to the idea. My question is, what about me? Why can't I sell my land too?

Nick C. Sablan
As Falipe, Saipan

Why the CNMI is broke

You want know why the CNMI is broke? One major reason is because of government salaries. CUC executive director Abe Malae makes around $180,000 per year and keeps complaining that CUC is broke. CNMI judges make around $120,000 per year. MVA's managing director Perry Tenorio makes around $80,000 per year. The CNMI Legislature just passed a bill that will give the CNMI attorney general $130,000 per year. Twenty-nine CNMI lawmakers make about $40,000 per year and have an $80,000 annual budget. Some $3,480,000 is how much the CNMI dishes out annually to keep 29 jobs in the Legislature. Where is the shame?

Antonio Aldan
Kagman, Saipan

LEADERS

From Page 10

Satirists start with a nucleus of truth and build on it. But Colbert, on ABC News, barely needed to exaggerate. His first sentence captured the gist of the current shell game. And the latter two sentences bring to mind a true story about Lyndon B. Johnson running for office in Texas. He told an aide to spread the rumor that his opponent enjoyed carnal relations with animals. The aide said the charge wasn't true. LBJ said, "I know that. But let's make the SOB deny it."

Colbert is fortunate to be plying his craft in a culture soaked in postmodern irony, but he's part of a tradition that dates back at least to Jonathan Swift. Three centuries ago, Swift was lauded and reviled in England as a satirical enfant terrible, particularly when he skewered British policy toward Ireland. Mimicking the earnest political tracts of his era, Swift in 1729 offered his "modest proposal" that the Irish solve their hunger and poverty by eating their own children.

Colbert's deadpan delivery is reminiscent of Swift's deadpan prose: "I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London that a young, healthy child, well-nursed, is, at a year old, a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled."

Many Brits didn't get the joke, and not all Americans appreciate Colbert. Leslie Marshall, a radio talk-show host, complained the other day that Colbert is "choosing to make a mockery of both our voting process and the seriousness of an individual running for office. ... The matter of running this country, keeping us safe, working to create jobs, health care, etc., is no laughing matter."

Actually, our leaders have long made a mockery of the process without any help from Colbert. His performance art is welcome proof that humor can spotlight absurdity, on the bumpy road to truthiness.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Sunny. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 5 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼72°	▲85° ▼72°	▲85° ▼75°	▲85° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

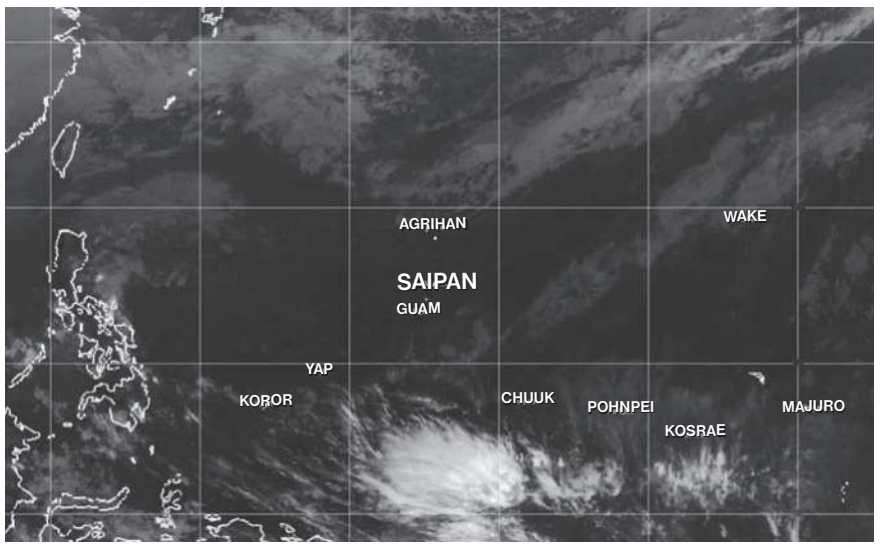
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼76
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼77
Yap	Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲88	▼79
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼80
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼80
Majuro	Showers	▲85	▼79

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲72	▼65
Beijing	Sunny	▲31	▼ 8
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲64	▼56
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲80	▼69
London	Partly Cloudy	▲39	▼32
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲67	▼45
Manila	Thundershowers	▲85	▼75
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲76	▼56
Miami	Showers	▲78	▼68
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲54	▼43
Osaka	Showers	▲43	▼33
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲34	▼21
Pusan	Windy	▲36	▼19
Rome	Rain	▲52	▼34
Salem	Showers	▲51	▼42
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲60	▼45
Seoul	Sunny	▲21	▼ 7
Tokyo	Sunny	▲48	▼31
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲64	▼46

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front curves southwestward from 25N162E to the far Northern Marianas at 19N146E then northwestward past 25N132E. Cloudiness and patchy rain are along and north of the front to beyond 25N. A stationary front extends southwestward from 25N180 to 16N160E then continues as a weak shear line south of Guam to end just east of Koror at 7N137E. Cloudiness and scattered showers are along and up to 300 miles northwest of the front and widely scattered showers are along the shear line. Trade-wind convergence near the equator is causing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms southwest of Chuuk to the south of a line from 4N143E to 4N152E while scattered showers are south of Pohnpei and kosrae to the south of a line from 4N152E to 4N166E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

1:23 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.3 Feet
6:31 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.9 Feet
12:36 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
8:17 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.4 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46 AM	6:14 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Thursday	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:16 PM
Saturday	6:46 AM	6:16 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:44 AM	
Wednesday	12:27 PM	12:48 AM
Thursday	1:13 PM	1:38 AM
Friday	2:02 PM	2:29 AM
Saturday	2:55 PM	3:20 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)			
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)			
DL287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
DL285	6:35am	9:15am	1, 3, 5, 7
DL297	4:25pm	7:15pm	Daily
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)			
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	Daily via KIX
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)			
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7
DL581	4:10am	7:30am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C05076/147	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:50pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)			
C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5
ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)			
C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6
C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6
NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
DL286	7:40pm	12:20am+1	2, 4, 6, 7
OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN			
OZ120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	Daily
SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6
DL580	10:10pm	2:55am+1	4, 7
GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM
C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ704/603	11:40pm	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM
HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

Business

AP

Communist party affiliated protesters hold a banner that reads "Troika Get Out of Greece" during a peaceful protest outside the Athens Hilton Hotel, where senior international debt inspectors are staying, on Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2012.

Greek debt deal may not equal Wall Street relief

NEW YORK (AP)—Greece and the investors who bought its bonds have the beginnings of a deal that could avert a disastrous, long-feared Greek default on its debt. But don't expect a celebration on Wall Street this week.

If the deal holds and works, it will help prevent a potential shock to the world banking system. It will also remove one of the biggest threats to the impressive rally in U.S. stocks this year.

The problem for investors is that good news—like real improvement in Greece's long-term finances—is likely to develop in slow motion. Bad news, like a breakdown in the debt talks or a spasm of market fear, would be faster. Punch-in-the-nose fast.

"I think they'll probably be happy, but I don't really see this accomplishing very much in the long term," says Michael E. Lewitt, editor of The Credit Strategist, an investor newsletter.

"They're not solving any of these problems," he says, so if things go wrong, "it's likely to be a much worse sell-off."

Under the tentative agreement, announced Saturday, investors holding euro206 billion in Greek bonds, or about $272 billion, would exchange them for bonds with half the face value. The replacement bonds would have a longer maturity and pay a lower interest rate.

The deal would reduce Greece's annual interest expense from about euro10 billion to about euro4 billion. When the bonds mature, Greece would have to pay its bondholders only euro103 billion.

It is unclear how investors who buy and sell the bonds of other debt-burdened countries, such as Italy, Spain and Portugal, will react. If they drive up borrowing costs for those countries, the debt crisis could get worse.

Private investors hold two-thirds of Greece's debt, which is equal to an unsustainable 160 percent of its annual economic output. By restructuring the debt, Greece hopes to make it a more manageable 120 percent by decade's end.

Greece's public creditors—the International Monetary Fund, the European Union and the European Central Bank—want the government to cut public salaries further to bring the national budget in line.

That proposal has been met with resistance by Greek politicians afraid of losing elections this spring. But they also worry Greece will be denied euro130 billion in bailout money if it can't cut its deficit.

The restructuring of Greece's private debt could still fall apart. If it does, that could mean trouble in the U.S. markets, which have enjoyed a placid January of steady gains.

The Dow Jones industrial average is up 3.6 percent in the young year. The Standard & Poor's 500 index has gained 4.7 percent, roughly half its average gainfor a full year.

If the Greek talks break down, "the stock market could probably lose half its gains for the year," Jeffrey Kleintop, chief market strategist at LPL Financial, said last week, before Greece and the private investors reached their tentative deal.

On paper, it's hard to see how Greece could take down financial markets in the U.S., the world's biggest economy, with $15.2 trillion in goods and services churned out every year.

Greece's annual economic output is euro220 billion. That translates to $285 billion, on par with the economy of Maryland. The U.S. sells $1.6 billion in weapons, medicine and other products to Greece each year, a minuscule 0.07 percent of exports.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Feds: Megaupload user data could be gone Thursday

Federal prosecutors say data from users of Megaupload could be deleted as soon as Thursday. U.S. prosecutors blocked access to Megaupload and charged seven men, saying the site facilitated millions of illegal downloads of movies, music and other content. The company says its millions of users stored their own data, including family photos and personal documents. They haven't been able to see their data since the government raids earlier this month, but there has been hope would be able to get it back. ***(AP)***

RBS CEO turns down bonus amid criticism of payout

LONDON (AP)—Royal Bank of Scotland chief executive Stephen Hester will not be accepting a 1 million pound ($1.5 million) bonus that drew criticism from British public and politicians, the bank said Sunday. Spokesman David Gaffney said Hester would not receive the bonus of 3.6 million shares he was awarded last week by the board of the largely state-owned bank. The British government spent 45 billion pounds bailing out RBS three years ago. It still owns an 82 percent stake, and politicians had criticized the reward at a time when Britons face painful spending cuts and tax hikes.

Exxon selling Japanese subsidiary in $3.9B deal

Exxon Mobil Corp. is selling its Japanese refining and marketing business to partner TonenGeneral Sekiyu K.K. in a deal valued at $3.9 billion. TonenGeneral Sekiyu will buy 99 percent of the shares of Exxon Mobil Yugen Kaisha, which refines and sells fuel and lubricants, the Japanese refiner said. Exxon Mobil's stake in TonenGeneral will drop to 22 percent from 50 percent. Exxon Mobil said the deal, announced Sunday, will result in a refining and marketing business "better positioned to meet Japan's energy needs." ***(AP)***

Euro, rich-poor gap proved key issues at Davos

DAVOS, Switzerland (AP)—Europe's crippling debt crisis dominated the world's foremost gathering of business and political leaders, but for the first time the growing inequality between the planet's haves and have-nots became an issue, thanks largely to the Arab Spring uprisings, the Occupy movement and other protests around the globe.

The mood at the end of the five-day meeting in Davos was somber, and more than 2,500 VIPs headed home Sunday concerned about what lies ahead in 2012. Plenty of champagne flowed in this alpine ski resort—but the atmosphere was flat and the bubbling enthusiasm of some past World Economic Forums was noticeably absent.

Despite some guarded optimism about Europe's latest attempts to stem the eurozone crisis, fears remain that turmoil could return and spill over to the rest of the world. And there were no answers to the widening inequality gap, but a mounting realization that economic growth must include the poor, that job creation is critical, and that affordable food, housing, health care and education need to part of any solution.

Just before the forum began, the International Monetary Fund reduced its forecast for global growth in 2012 to 3.3 percent from the 4 percent pace it projected in September. Many other economic forecasters also predict a slowing economy, including New York University's Nouriel Roubini, who is widely acknowledged to have predicted the crash of 2008 and who said he might be "even slightly more bearish" on the new IMF forecast.

Asia is expected to remain the engine for global growth though at a slower rate, with China leading the way at more than 8 percent, followed by India and Indonesia.

IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde warned that the eurozone crisis is not the region's problem alone.

"It's a crisis that could have collateral effects, spillover effects, around the world," she said. "What I have seen, and what the IMF has seen in numbers and forecasts, is that no country is immune and everybody has an interest in making sure that this crisis is resolved adequately."

The IMF is the world's traditional lender-of-last-resort and Lagarde is trying to increase its resources by $500 billion so it can help if more lending is needed in Europe or elsewhere. European countries have said they're prepared to give the IMF $150 billion, but that means the rest of the world will have to come up with $350 billion.

Congress tries to police itself on insider trading

WASHINGTON (AP)—Aware that most Americans would like to dump them all, members of Congress hope to regain some sense of trust by subjecting themselves to tougher penalties for insider trading and requiring they disclose stock transactions within 30 days.

A procedural vote Monday would allow the Senate later this week to pass a bill prohibiting members of Congress from using nonpublic information for their own personal benefit or "tipping" others to inside information that they could trade on.

Insider trading laws apply to all Americans, but CBS' "60 Minutes" in November said members of Congress get a pass, citing investment transactions by party leaders and a committee chairman in businesses about to be affected by pending legislation.

The broadcast report raised questions about trades of House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio; the husband of Democratic leader and former Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California; and Rep. Spencer Bachus, R-Ala., chairman of the House Financial Services Committee.

All three denied using any insider information to make stock trades, but the broadcast set off a flurry of efforts in Washington to deal with the public perception.

A recent Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll of registered voters found 56 percent of them favor replacing the entire 535-member Congress. Other polls this year have given Congress an approval rating between 11 percent and 13 percent, while disapproval percentages have ranged from 79 percent to 86 percent.

Nation

Time short for Gingrich to close gap in Florida

POMPANO BEACH, Fla. (AP)—Newt Gingrich slammed GOP rival Mitt Romney on Sunday for the steady stream of attacks he likened to "carpet-bombing," trying to cut into the resurgent front-runner's lead in Florida in the dwindling hours before Tuesday's pivotal presidential primary.

And despite surging ahead in polls, Romney wasn't letting up, relentlessly casting Gingrich as an influence peddler with a "record of failed leadership."

In what has become a wildly unpredictable race, the momentum has swung back to Romney, staggered last weekend by Gingrich's victory in South Carolina. Romney has begun advertising in Nevada ahead of that state's caucuses next Saturday, illustrating the challenges ahead for Gingrich, who has pledged to push ahead no matter what happens in Florida.

An NBC News/Marist poll published Sunday showed Romney with support from 42 percent of likely Florida primary voters, compared with 27 percent for Gingrich.

Romney's campaign has dogged Gingrich at his own campaign stops, sending surrogates to remind reporters of Gingrich's House ethics probe in the 1990s and other episodes in his career aimed at sowing doubt about his judgment.

Gingrich reacted defensively, accusing the former Massachusetts governor and a political committee that supports him of lying, and the GOP's establishment of allowing it.

"I don't know how you debate a person with civility if they're prepared to say things that are just plain factually false," Gingrich said during appearances on Sunday talk shows. "I think the Republican establishment believes it's OK to say and do virtually anything to stop a genuine insurgency from winning because they are very afraid of losing control of the old order."

Gingrich objected specifically to a Romney campaign ad that includes a 1997 NBC News report on the House's decision to discipline Gingrich, then speaker, for ethics charges.

Romney continued to paint Gingrich as part of the very Washington establishment he condemns and someone who had a role in the nation's economic problems.

"Your problem in Florida is that you worked for Freddie Mac at a time when Freddie Mac was not doing the right thing for the American people, and that you're selling influence in Washington at a time when we need people who will stand up for the truth in Washington," Romney told an audience in Naples.

Gingrich's consulting firm was paid more than $1.5 million by the federally-backed mortgage company over a period after he left Congress in 1999.

Former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum, trailing in Florida by a wide margin, stayed with his 3-year-old daughter, Bella, who was hospitalized with pneumonia. Sunday night he told supporters, "She without a doubt has turned the corner," but he cautioned she "isn't out of the woods yet."

Aides said Santorum would resume campaigning Monday in Missouri and Minnesota.

Texas Rep. Ron Paul, who has invested little in Florida, looked ahead to Nevada. The libertarian-leaning Paul is focusing more on gathering delegates in caucus states, where it's less expensive to campaign. But securing the nomination only through caucus states is a hard task.

The intense effort by Romney to slow Gingrich is comparable to his strategy against Gingrich in the closing month before Iowa's leadoff caucuses Jan. 3. Gingrich led in Iowa polls, lifted by what were hailed as strong performances in televised debates, only to drop in the face of withering attacks by Romney, aided immensely by ads sponsored by a "super" political action committee run by former Romney aides.

But Romney aides say they made the mistake of assuming Gingrich could not rise again as he did in South Carolina. Romney appears determined not to let that happen again.

"His record is one of failed leadership," Romney told more than 700 people at a rally in Pompano Beach Sunday evening. "We don't need someone who can speak well perhaps, or can say things we agree with, but does not have the experience of being an effective leader."

AP

Republican presidential candidate, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, with his wife Callista, meet with Libby Levine, 90, during a campaign event at the The Villages, Sunday, Jan. 29, 2012, in Lady Lake, Fla.

Changes in wake of troubled arms trafficking probe

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Justice Department is tightening procedures for responding to information requests from Congress in the aftermath of a troubled arms trafficking investigation.

In Operation Fast and Furious, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives allowed hundreds of weapons to flow across the border into Mexico.

The Justice Department told three congressional committees in a letter Friday night that it has improved coordination between agents and their managers in carrying out arms trafficking investigations.

Attorney General Eric Holder probably will face questions about the changes when he testifies Thursday before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. That committee has been investigating the department's mistakes in the probe since early last year.

In a letter last February to Iowa Sen. Charles Grassley, the top Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee, the department said that ATF had not authorized the sale of assault weapons to a straw purchaser and that the agency makes every effort to intercept weapons that have been purchased illegally.

Yet in Operation Fast and Furious, both statements turned out to be incorrect because the ATF office in Phoenix, Ariz., had undertaken a risky tactic known as "gun-walking" in an unsuccessful effort to track small-time illicit gun buyers to the heads of major arms trafficking networks.

Many of the guns wound up at crime scenes in Mexico and the U.S., including the scene of a killing near Nogales, Ariz., where U.S. border agent Brian Terry was slain. Two guns connected to Fast and Furious were found at the scene of Terry's murder.

Some ATF agents with direct knowledge of what had gone on with Operation Fast and Furious were talking to Grassley's office. In contrast, the Justice Department was relying on information from top ATF officials in Washington and the U.S. attorney in Phoenix, who all incorrectly denied that ATF was allowing weapons purchases by "straw" buyers to transport guns into Mexico.

In the letter to Congress on Friday night, Deputy Attorney General James Cole said the department must solicit information directly from employees with detailed personal knowledge of the subject matter at issue and consult records relevant to the inquiry if such records are available.

Oakland to assess damage after Occupy protests

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—For weeks the protests had waned, with only a smattering of people taking to Oakland's streets for occasional marches that bore little resemblance to the headline-grabbing Occupy demonstrations of last fall.

Then came Saturday, which started peacefully enough—a midday rally at City Hall and a march. But hours later, the scene near downtown Oakland had dramatically deteriorated: clashes punctuated by rock and bottle throwing by protesters and volleys of tear gas from police, and a City Hall break-in that left glass cases smashed, graffiti spray-painted on walls and an American flag burned.

More than 400 people were arrested on charges ranging from failure to disperse to vandalism, police spokesman Sgt. Jeff Thomason said. At least three officers and one protester were injured.

On Sunday, Oakland officials vowed to be ready if Occupy protesters try to mount another large-scale demonstration. Protesters, meanwhile, decried Saturday's police tactics as illegal and threatened to sue.

Mayor Jean Quan personally inspected damage caused by dozens of people who broke into City Hall. She said she wants a court order to keep Occupy protesters who have been arrested several times out of Oakland, which has been hit repeatedly by demonstrations that have cost the financially troubled city about $5 million.

Quan called on the loosely organized movement to "stop using Oakland as its playground."

"People in the community and people in the Occupy movement have to stop making excuses for this behavior," she said.

Saturday's protests—the most turbulent since Oakland police forcefully dismantled an Occupy encampment in November—came just days after the group announced a new round of actions. The group said it planned to use a vacant building as a social center and political hub and threatened to try to shut down the Port of Oakland for a third time, occupy the airport and take over City Hall.

After the mass arrests, the Occupy Oakland Media Committee criticized the police's conduct, saying that most of the arrests were made illegally because police failed to allow protesters to disperse. It threatened legal action.

"Contrary to their own policy, the OPD gave no option of leaving or instruction on how to depart. These arrests are completely illegal, and this will probably result in another class action lawsuit against the OPD," a release from the group said.

Deputy Police Chief Jeff Israel told reporters late Saturday that protesters gathered unlawfully and police gave them multiple verbal warnings to disband.

"These people gathered with the intent of unlawfully entering into a building that does not belong to them and assaulting the police," Israel said. "It was not a peaceful group."

Earlier this month, a court-appointed monitor submitted a report to a federal judge that included "serious concerns" about the department's handling of the Occupy protests. Police officials say they were in "close contact" with the federal monitor during the protests.

ACROSS THE NATION

Florida highway pileup kills at least 10 people

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (AP)—A long line of cars and trucks collided one after another early Sunday on a dark Florida highway so shrouded in haze and smoke that drivers were instantly blinded. At least 10 people were killed. When rescuers first arrived, they could only listen for screams and moans because the poor visibility made it difficult to find victims in wreckage that was strewn for nearly a mile, police said. Authorities were still trying to determine what caused the pileup south of Gainesville on Interstate 75, which had been closed for a time before the accidents because of the mixture of fog and heavy smoke from a brush fire that may have been intentionally set. At least a dozen cars and six tractor-trailers were involved, and some burst into flames.

3 children die in Mississippi house fire

NESHOBA, Miss. (AP)—Authorities say an early-morning house fire in central Mississippi has killed three children, and a fourth is in a burn center. Neshoba County Sheriff's investigator Ralph Sciple (SY-puhl) tells The Neshoba Democrat that 3-month-old Neldavinna Tubby, 1-year-old Omarion Tubby and 2-year-old Sharron Tubby died in the fire early Sunday. He says their father, Josh Tubby, and grandfather Tommy Wickson were taken by ambulance to a hospital. A fourth child—Orex Wickson—was sent to a burn center in Georgia.

Officers checking robbery find 5 dead in Ala. home

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP)—Police found five people dead inside a Birmingham home when they arrived early Sunday morning to investigate a possible robbery, authorities said. Birmingham Police Sgt. Johnny Williams said officers arrived at the house around 3:30 a.m. Sunday after getting a call that a robbery was in progress and soon discovered the five victims. He told reporters that investigators are interviewing potential witnesses but so far have made no arrests. "Someone out there knows more information," said Williams. "We know someone is going to do the right thing."

Asia

Suu Kyi galvanizes once-repressed Myanmar politics

DAWEI, Myanmar (AP)—Euphoric seas of supporters waved opposition party flags and offered yellow garlands. They lined crumbling roads for miles and climbed atop trees, cars and roofs as Aung San Suu Kyi spoke at impromptu rallies. Some cried as her convoy passed.

Cheered by tens of thousands, the 66-year-old opposition leader electrified Myanmar's repressive political landscape everywhere she traveled Sunday on her first political tour of the countryside since her party registered to run in a historic ballot that could see her elected to parliament for the first time.

"We will bring democracy to the country," Suu Kyi said to roaring applause as her voice boomed through loudspeakers from the balcony of a National League for Democracy office in the southern coastal district of Dawei. "We will bring rule of law ... and we will see to it that repressive laws are repealed."

As huge crowds screamed "Long Live Daw Aung San Suu Kyi!" and others held banners saying "You Are Our Heart," she said: "We can overcome any obstacle with unity and perseverance, however difficult it may be."

Suu Kyi's campaign and by-elections due April 1 are being watched closely by the international community, which sees the vote as a crucial test of whether the military-backed government is really committed to reform.

The mere fact that Suu Kyi was able to speak openly in public in Dawei—and her supporters were able to greet her en masse without fear of reprisal—was proof of dramatic progress itself. Such scenes would have been unthinkable just a year ago, when the long-ruling junta was still in power and demonstrations were all but banned.

Suu Kyi's visit was equivalent to waking a sleeping dragon, said environmental activist Aung Zaw Hein.

"People had been afraid to discuss politics for so long," he said. "Now that she's visiting, the political spirit of people has been awakened."

Looking into the giant crowds, Hein added: "I've never seen people's faces look like this before. For the first time, they have hope in their eyes."

Businesman Ko Ye said he was ecstatic that Suu Kyi came, and like most people here, he welcomed the recent dramatic changes that made her trip possible. "We are all hoping for democracy," the 49-year-old said, "but we're afraid these reforms can be reversed at anytime."

After nearly half a century of iron-fisted military rule, a nominally civilian government took office last March. The new government has surprised even some of its toughest critics by releasing hundreds of political prisoners, signing cease-fire deals with ethnic rebels, increasing media freedoms and easing censorship laws.

Suu Kyi's party boycotted the 2010 election as neither free nor fair. It sought to have its legal status restored after the government amended electoral laws. Her party has been cleared to offer candidates in the April vote, and an Election Commission ruling on Suu Kyi's candidacy is expected in February.

Some critics are concerned the government is using its opening with Suu Kyi to show it's committed to reform. The government needs her support to get years of harsh Western sanctions lifted.

On Sunday, Suu Kyi said the opposition had struggled for democracy for decades, but the best way to do that now was to fight "from within parliament."

AP

Myanmar pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi delivers her speech to supporters as she arrives at a branch office of her National League for Democracy party in Dawei Sunday, Jan.29, 2012, in Dawei, about 615 km (380 miles) south of Yangon, Myanmar.

But she also expressed caution over the challenges ahead. "It's easy to make problems, but it's not easy to implement them," she said. "We have a lot to do."

An NLD victory would be highly symbolic, but her party would have limited power since the legislature is overwhelmingly dominated by the military and the ruling pro-military party. Up for grabs are 48 seats vacated by lawmakers who were appointed to the Cabinet and other posts.

Suu Kyi has spent 15 of the past 23 years under house arrest, and as a result, has rarely traveled outside Yangon. Although she conducted one successful day of rallies north of Yangon last year, a previous political tour to greet supporters in 2003 sparked a bloody ambush of her convoy that saw her forcibly confined at her lakeside home.

She was finally released from house arrest in late 2010, just days after the elections that installed the current government and led to the junta's official disbandment.

Suu Kyi met with party members in Dawei, including one running for a parliament seat. She will make similar political trips to other areas, including the country's second-largest city, Mandalay, in early February before officially campaigning for her own seat, party spokesman Nyan Win said.

ASIA BRIEFS

China paper says punish Philippines over US ties

BEIJING (AP)—An official Chinese newspaper says Beijing must punish the Philippines economically for proposing closer military ties with Washington. The nationalist tabloid Global Times, published by the Communist Party's People's Daily, said Sunday that China must pressure Manila to abandon cooperation with the U.S. China and the Philippines, along with other nations, are locked in a territorial dispute in the South China Sea, and Beijing sees the U.S. as an unwelcome interloper in that dispute. U.S. and Philippine officials agreed last week to increase cooperation in various areas including maritime security and defense. The Philippines said it is considering more joint military exercises and a greater presence by American troops.

Flood in illegal Philippine gold mine kills 2

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Police say seawater has flooded an illegal gold mine in a remote area of the Philippines, killing two miners. Police officer Wilmore Fresco says the bodies of the two men were retrieved Sunday. He says police searched the mine in the coastal town of Paracale in Camarines Norte province to check if other miners were trapped in the vertical pit. Fresco says the miners may have dug their pit too close to the sea or failed to fortify the tunnel walls to prevent seawater from seeping in. Officials have long banned the mining practice because of the danger of cave-ins and flooding, but it has persisted in the impoverished region because of the lure of quick money.

Firing of TV host a victory for Pakistani liberals

ISLAMABAD (AP)—In a rare victory for Pakistani liberals, a private TV station decided to fire a popular morning show host after she sparked outrage by running around a public park trying to expose young, unmarried couples hanging out, a taboo in this conservative Muslim country. Pakistani liberals derided host Maya Khan's behavior on Twitter and Facebook, comparing it to the kind of moral policing practiced by the Taliban, and started an online petition asking Samaa TV to end this "irresponsible programming" and apologize. The company responded Saturday in a letter sent to reporters saying it had decided to fire Khan and her team and cancel her show because she refused to issue an unconditional apology for the Jan. 17 program.

Can NATO force weather France's faster exit?

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—France's call for a speedier NATO exit from Afghanistan reflects the depth of war fatigue in the West and raises fears that other countries in the U.S.-led coalition will succumb to rising political pressure and pull their troops home early.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy's decision to fast-track its withdrawal—just days after an Afghan soldier gunned down four French troops—is the latest crack in a coalition already strained by economic troubles in Europe and the United States, the Afghan government's sluggish battle against corruption, on-again off-again cooperation from neighboring Pakistan and a dogged Taliban bloodied but not beaten.

The international coalition is already rushing against the clock to meet President Hamid Karzai's goal of having the Afghan police and army in charge of the nation's security by the end of 2014. France's break with that timetable, which was agreed to by NATO members, now raises the question: Can the coalition stay together until then?

Resetting the date to end the coalition's combat mission could strengthen arguments for President Barack Obama to accelerate U.S. troop withdrawals beyond the 33,000 he's sending home by the end of this year, and reopen a debate over whether setting a withdrawal deadline allows the Taliban to seize more territory once foreign forces are gone.

It's unclear whether Sarkozy's call for all foreign forces to hand security over to the Afghan forces in 2013 will have any traction when it is presented next week at a NATO defense ministers' meeting in Brussels. If other nations see France's move as a green light to speed up their withdrawals, it will complicate the current strategy for a coordinated pullout.

In a gentle rebuke to France, British Prime Minister David Cameron said in London on Saturday that withdrawals should be dependent on security conditions on the ground. Britain has said it's keeping to plans to withdraw its 9,500 troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

"The rate at which we can reduce our troops will depend on the transition to Afghan control in the different parts of Afghanistan, and that should be the same for all of the members of NATO," Cameron said after meeting with Karzai.

Other nations facing extreme economic problems, such as Italy and Spain, are not planning early withdrawals.

"We are a responsible country. We are a big country that honors its commitments that it agrees to make," said Minister Giampaolo Di Paola, defense minister in Italy, which this week signed a pact aimed at supporting Afghanistan after foreign forces withdraw in 2014.

Germany also said it agrees with the goal to hand over security responsibility by the end of 2014 and withdraw combat troops.

Police open fire at Bangladesh protesters, 3 dead

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP)—Police fired guns and used batons on crowds of stone-throwing opposition activists in several Bangladesh towns Sunday, killing at least three people and injuring more than 100, a news report and doctors at two hospitals said.

The opposition party said 1,200 of its activists were arrested, but the figure could not immediately be confirmed.

The main Bangladesh Nationalist Party and its key Islamist ally Jamaat-e-Islami are demanding an independent caretaker government oversee elections. The government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina scrapped the 15-year-old system last year, saying it contradicted the constitution.

The opposition, led by Hasina's archrival former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, says elections will be rigged if held under the current government and without a caretaker system in place.

Clashes during Sunday's nationwide protests were reported in about a dozen towns, Desh television station said.

Two men died from bullet wounds at a government hospital in the eastern town of Chandpur, physician Mahmudunnabi told The Associated Press by phone.

They were shot by police who fired at a procession of protesters trying to march forward by breaking a police barricade, the United News of Bangladesh agency said.

Separately, a youth died and four people with bullet wounds were being treated at a government hospital in Laxmipur, another eastern town, said doctor Mohammad Nizam Uddin.

The identities of the dead were not immediately clear. Zia's party claimed one was a party activist while media reports said two others were rickshawpullers.

Hasan Mahmud Khandaker, the country's police chief, said authorities would investigate the violence to determine what actually happened.

Police arrested about 1,200 activists, opposition spokesman Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said. The figure could not be confirmed immediately.

The South Asian nation's politics became tense recently as the opposition has geared up its anti-government protests targeting the next general election due in 2014.

World

Jury finds Afghan family guilty in honor killings

KINGSTON, Ontario (AP)—A jury on Sunday found an Afghan father, his wife and their son guilty of killing three teenage sisters and a co-wife in what the judge described as "cold-blooded, shameful murders" resulting from a "twisted concept of honor."

The jury took 15 hours to find Mohammad Shafia, 58; his wife Tooba Yahya, 42; and their son Hamed, 21, each guilty of four counts of first-degree murder in a case that shocked and riveted Canadians from coast to coast. First-degree murder carries an automatic life sentence with no chance of parole for 25 years.

After the verdict was read, the three defendants again declared their innocence in the killings of sisters Zainab, 19, Sahar 17, and Geeti, 13, as well as Rona Amir Mohammad, 52, Shafia's childless first wife in a polygamous marriage.

Their bodies were found June 30, 2009, in a car submerged in a canal in Kingston, Ontario, where the family had stopped for the night on their way home to Montreal from Niagara Falls, Ontario.

Prosecutors said the defendants allegedly killed the three teenage sisters because they dishonored the family by defying its disciplinarian rules on dress, dating, socializing and going online. Shafia's first wife was living with him and his second wife. The polygamous relationship, if revealed, could have resulted in their deportation.

The prosecution alleged it was a case of premeditated murder, staged to look like an accident after it was carried out. Prosecutors said the defendants drowned their victims elsewhere on the site, placed their bodies in the car and pushed it into the canal.

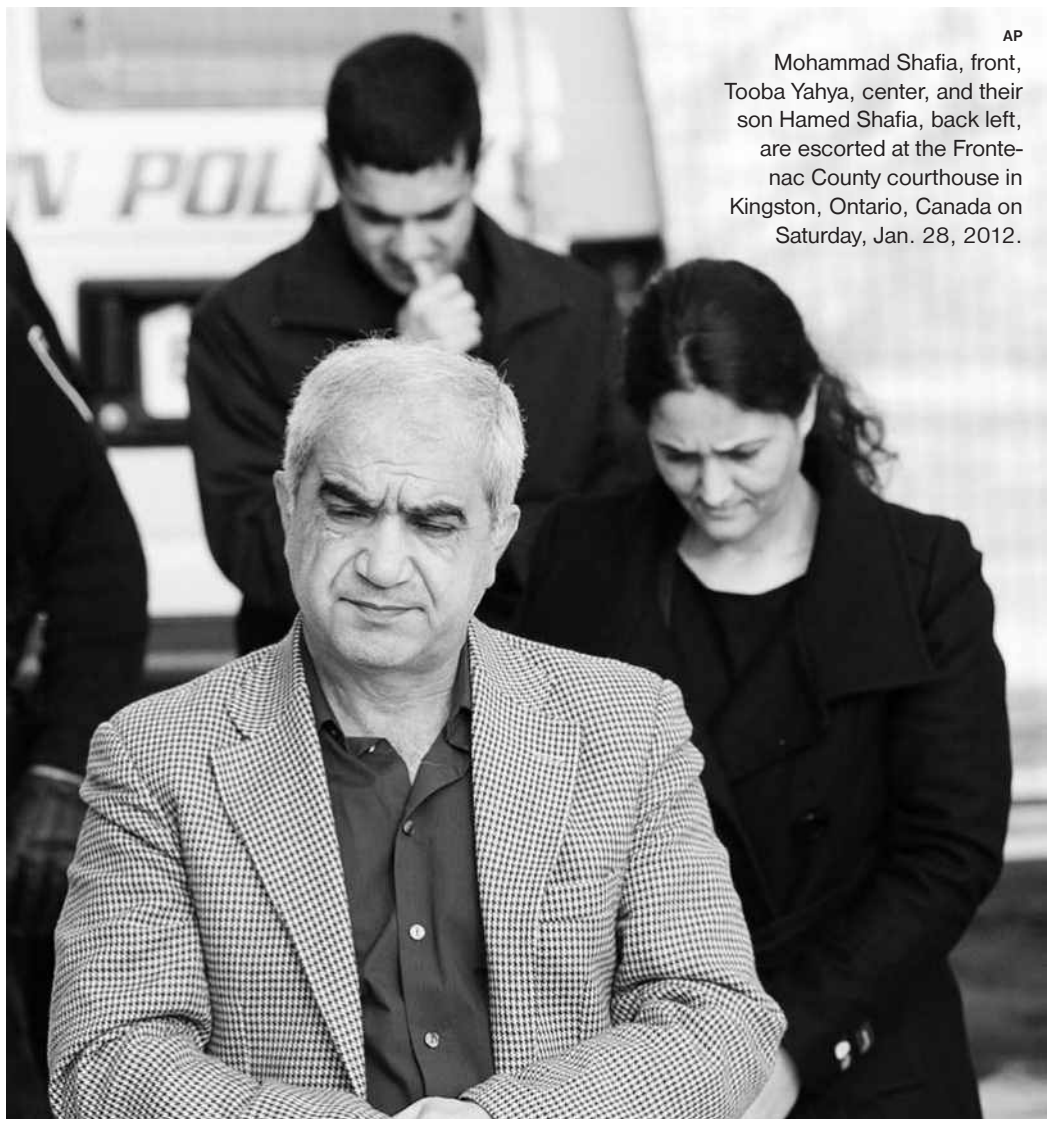
Defense lawyers said the deaths were accidental. They said the Nissan car accidentally plunged into the canal after the eldest daughter, Zainab, took it for a joy ride with her sisters and her father's first wife. Hamed said he watched the accident, although he didn't call police from the scene. After the jury returned the verdicts, Mohammad Shafia, speaking through a translator, said, "We are not criminal, we are not murderer, we didn't commit the murder and this is unjust."

His weeping wife, Tooba, also declared the verdict unjust, saying, "I am not a murderer, and I am a mother, a mother."

Their son, Hamed, speaking in English said, "I did not drown my sisters anywhere."

But Judge Robert Maranger was unmoved, saying the evidence clearly supported their conviction for "the planned and deliberate murder of four members of your family."

"It is difficult to conceive of a more despicable, more heinous crime ... the apparent reason behind these cold-blooded, shameful murders was that the four completely innocent victims offended your completely twisted concept of honor ... that has absolutely no place in any civilized society."



AP

Mohammad Shafia, front, Tooba Yahya, center, and their son Hamed Shafia, back left, are escorted at the Frontenac County courthouse in Kingston, Ontario, Canada on Saturday, Jan. 28, 2012.

Hamed's lawyer, Patrick McCann, said he was disappointed with the verdict, but said his client will appeal and he believes the other two defendants will as well.

But prosecutor Gerard Laarhuis welcomed the verdict.

"This jury found that four strong, vivacious and freedom-loving women were murdered by their own family in the most troubling of circumstances," Laarhuis said outside court.

"This verdict sends a very clear message about our Canadian values and the core principles in a free and democratic society that all Canadians enjoy and even visitors to Canada enjoy," he said to cheers of approval from onlookers.

The family had left Afghanistan in 1992 and lived in Pakistan, Australia and Dubai before settling in Canada in 2007. Shafia, a wealthy businessman, married Yahya because his first wife could not have children.

The prosecution painted a picture of a household controlled by a domineering Shafia, with Hamed keeping his sisters in line and doling out discipline when his father was away on frequent business trips to Dubai.

The months leading up to the deaths were not happy ones in the Shafia household, according to evidence presented at trial. Zainab, the oldest daughter, was forbidden to attend school for a year because she had a young Pakistani-Canadian boyfriend, and she fled to a shelter, terrified of her father, the court was told.

The prosecution said her parents found condoms in Sahar's room as well as photos of her wearing short skirts and hugging her Christian boyfriend, a relationship she had kept secret. Geeti was becoming almost impossible to control: skipping school, failing classes, being sent home for wearing revealing clothes and stealing, while declaring to authority figures that she wanted to be placed in foster care, according to the prosecution.

Shafia's first wife wrote in a diary that her husband beat her and "made life a torture," while his second wife called her a servant.

The prosecution presented wire taps and cell phone records from the Shafia family in court to support their honor killing theory. The wiretaps, which capture Shafia spewing vitriol about his dead daughters, calling them treacherous and whores and invoking the devil to defecate on their graves, were a focal point of the trial.

"There can be no betrayal, no treachery, no violation more than this," Shafia said on one recording. "Even if they hoist me up onto the gallows ... nothing is more dear to me than my honor."

Defense lawyers argued that at no point in the intercepts do the accused say they drowned the victims.

Shafia's lawyer, Peter Kemp, said after the verdicts that he believes the comments his client made on the wiretaps may have weighed more heavily on the jury's minds than the physical evidence in the case.

"He wasn't convicted for what he did," Kemp said. "He was convicted for what he said."

Up to 10 months to remove capsized cruise ship

GIGLIO, Italy (AP)—The cruise ship that capsized off Italy's coast will take up to 10 months to remove, officials said Sunday, as rough seas off the Tuscan coast forced the suspension of recovery operations.

Officials called off both the start of operations to remove of 500,000 gallons of fuel and the search for people still missing after determining the Costa Concordia had moved four centimeters (an inch and a half) over six hours, coupled with waves of more than one meter (three feet).

A 17th body, identified as Peruvian crew member Erika Soria Molina, was found Saturday. Sixteen crew and passengers remain listed as missing, with one body recovered from the ship not yet identified.

Officials have virtually ruled out finding anyone alive more than two weeks after the Costa Concordia hit a reef, but were reluctant to give a final death toll for the Jan. 13 disaster. The crash happened when the captain deviated from his planned route, creating a huge gash that capsized the ship. More than 4,200 people were on board.

"Our first goal was to find people alive," Franco Gabrielli, the national civil protection official in charge of the operation, told a daily briefing. "Now we have a single, big goal, and that is that this does not translate into an environmental disaster."

University of Florence professor Riccardo Fanti said the ship's movements could either be caused by the ship settling on its own weight, slipping deeper into the seabed, or both. He also could not rule out the ship's sliding along the seabed.

Gabrielli noted that the body of a man recovered from the ship remains unidentified, despite efforts to obtain DNA samples from all of the missing, meaning that officials cannot preclude that the deceased is someone unknown to authorities. Costa has said that it runs strict procedures that would preclude the presence of any unregistered passengers.

Experts have said it would take 28 days to remove fuel from 15 tanks accounting for more than 80 percent of all fuel on board the ship. The next job would be to target the engine room, which contains nearly 350 cubic meters of diesel, fuel and other lubricants, Gabrielli said.

Only once the fuel is removed can work begin on removing the ship, either floating it in one piece or cutting it up and towing it away as a wreck. Costa has begun the process for taking bids for the recovery operation, a process that will take two months.

Gabrielli said the actual removal will take from seven to 10 months—meaning that the wreck will be visible from the coast of the island of Giglio for the entire summer tourism season.

Residents of Giglio have been circulating a petition to demand that officials provide more information on how the full-scale operations can coexist with the important tourism season. At the moment, access to the port for private boats has been banned and all boats must stay at least one mile (1.6 kilometers) from the wrecked ship, affecting access to Giglio's only harbor for fishermen, scuba divers and private boat owners.

"We are really sorry, we would have preferred to save them all. But now other needs and other problems arise," said Franca Melils, a local business owner who is promoting a petition for the tourist season. "It's about us, who work and make a living exclusively from tourism. We don't have factories, we don't have anything else."

WORLD BRIEFS

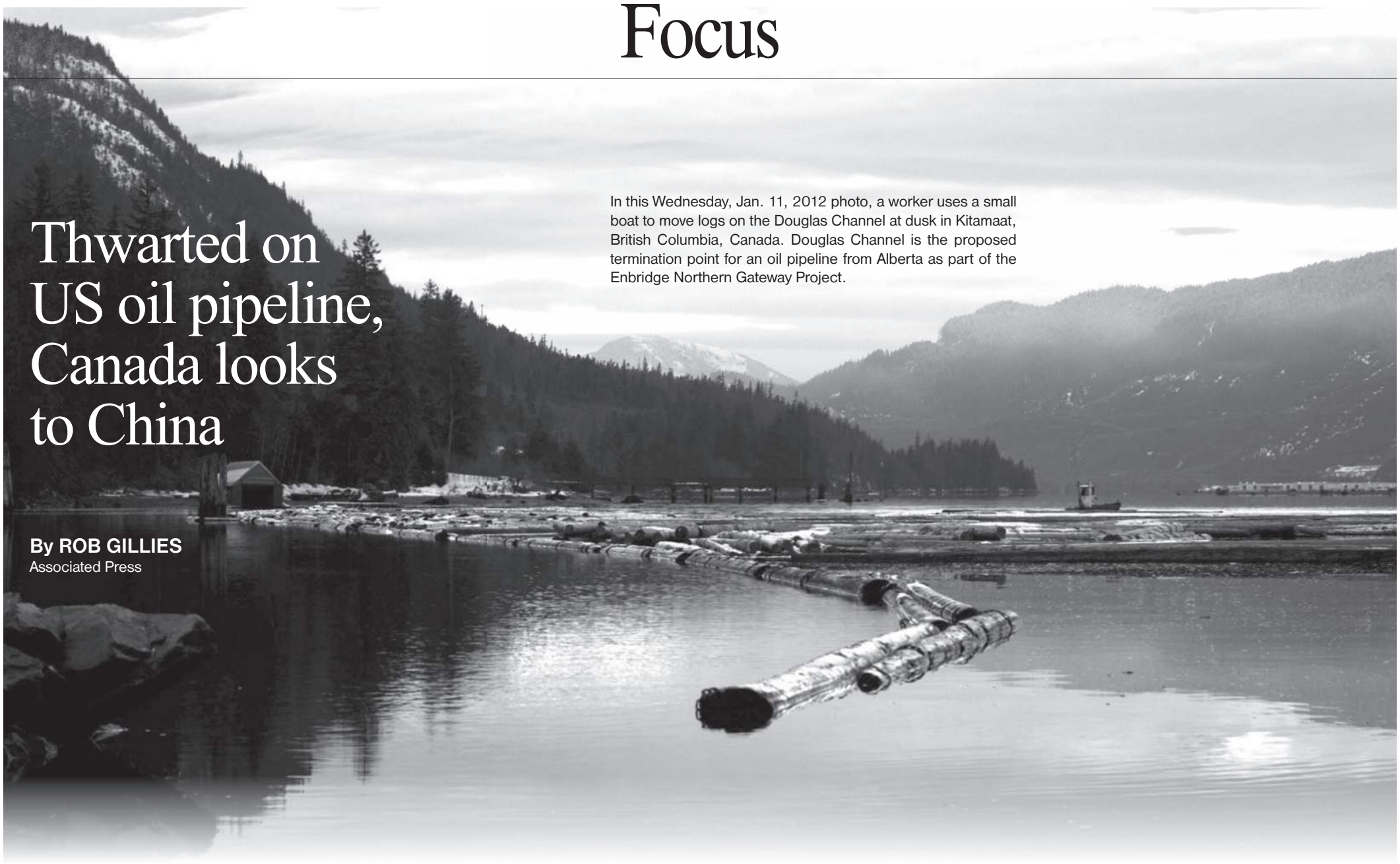
Syrian troops storm areas near capital of Damascus

BEIRUT (AP)—In dozens of tanks and armored vehicles, Syrian troops stormed rebellious areas near the capital Sunday, shelling neighborhoods that have fallen under the control of army dissidents and clashing with fighters. At least 62 people were killed in violence nationwide, activists and residents said. The widescale offensive near the capital suggested the regime is worried that military defectors could close in on Damascus, which has remained relatively quiet while most other Syrian cities descended into chaos after the uprising began in March. The rising bloodshed added urgency to Arab and Western diplomatic efforts to end the 10-month conflict. The violence has gradually approached the capital. In the past two weeks, army dissidents have become more visible, seizing several suburbs on the eastern edge of Damascus and setting up checkpoints where masked men wearing military attire and wielding assault rifles stop motorists and protect anti-regime protests.

Abbas: Israel to blame for failure of latest talks

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP)—The Israeli and Palestinian leaders on Sunday blamed each other for the impasse in newly launched peace efforts, raising doubts about whether the dialogue would continue just weeks after it began. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas accused Israel of spoiling the low-level talks, saying it failed to present detailed proposals for borders and security requested by international mediators. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the Palestinians "refused to even discuss" Israeli security needs. For the past month, the sides have held Jordanian-mediated exploratory talks at the urging of the Quartet of international Mideast mediators—the U.S., the U.N., the E.U. and Russia. The goal of the talks has been to find a formula to resume formal peace negotiations, with the aim of forging an agreement this year.

Focus



In this Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2012 photo, a worker uses a small boat to move logs on the Douglas Channel at dusk in Kitamaat, British Columbia, Canada. Douglas Channel is the proposed termination point for an oil pipeline from Alberta as part of the Enbridge Northern Gateway Project.

Thwarted on US oil pipeline, Canada looks to China

By ROB GILLIES
Associated Press

KITAMAAT VILLAGE, British Columbia (AP)—The latest chapter in Canada's quest to become a full-blown oil superpower unfolded this month in a village gym on the British Columbia coast.

Here, several hundred people gathered for hearings on whether a pipeline should be laid from the Alberta oil sands to the Pacific in order to deliver oil to Asia, chiefly energy-hungry China. The stakes are particularly high for the village of Kitamaat and its neighbors, because the pipeline would terminate here and a port would be built to handle 220 tankers a year and 525,000 barrels of oil a day.

But the planned Northern Gateway Pipeline is just one aspect of an epic battle over Canada's oil ambitions—a battle that already has a supporting role in the U.S. presidential election, and which will help to shape North America's future energy relationship with China.

It actually is a tale of two pipelines—the one that is supposed to end at Kitamaat Village, and another that would have gone from Alberta to the Texas coast but was blocked by the Obama administration citing environmental grounds.

Those same environmental issues are certain to haunt Northern Gateway as the Joint Review Panel of energy and environmental officials canvasses opinion along the 1,177 kilometer (731 mile) route of the Northern Gateway pipeline to be built by Enbridge, a Canadian company.

The fear of oil spills is especially acute in this pristine corner of northwest British Columbia, with its snow-capped mountains and deep ocean inlets. People here still remember the Exxon Valdez oil spill of 1989, and oil is still leaking from the Queen of the North, a ferry that sank off nearby Hartley Bay six years ago.

The seas nearby, in the Douglas Channel, "are very treacherous waters," says David Suzuki, a leading environmentalist. "You take a supertanker that takes miles in order to stop, (and) an accident is absolutely inevitable."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper says Canada's national interest makes the $5.5 billion pipeline essential. He was "profoundly disappointed" that U.S. President Barack Obama rejected the Texas Keystone XL option but also spoke of the need to diversify Canada's oil industry. Ninety-seven percent of Canadian oil exports now go to the U.S.

"I think what's happened around the Keystone is a wake-up call, the degree to which we are dependent or possibly held hostage to decisions in the United States, and especially decisions that may be made for very bad political reasons," he told Canadian TV.

Republican presidential candidate Newt Gingrich quickly picked up the theme, saying that Harper, "who, by the way, is conservative and pro-American ... has said he's going cut a deal with the Chinese ... We'll get none of the jobs, none of the energy, none of the opportunity."

He charged that "An American president who can create a Chinese-Canadian partnership is truly a danger to this country."

But the environmental objections that pushed Obama to block the pipeline to Texas apply equally to the Pacific pipeline, and the review panel says more than 4,000 people have signed up to testify.

The atmosphere has turned acrimonious, with Natural Resources Minister Joe Oliver claiming in an open letter that "environmental and other radical groups" are out to thwart Canada's economic ascent.

He said they were bent on bogging down the panel's work. And in an unusually caustic mention of Canada's southern neighbor, he added: "If all other avenues have failed, they will take a quintessential American approach: Sue everyone and anyone to delay the project even further."

Environmentalists and First Nations (a Canadian synonym for native tribes) could delay approval all the way to the Supreme Court, and First Nations still hold title to some of the land the pipeline would cross, meaning the government will have to move with extreme sensitivity.

Alberta has the world's third-largest oil reserves after Saudi Arabia and Venezuela: more than 170 billion barrels. Daily production of 1.5 million barrels from the oil sands is expected to increase to 3.7 million in 2025, which the oil industry sees as a pressing reason to build the pipelines.

Critics, however, dislike the whole concept of tapping the oil sands, saying it requires huge amounts of energy and water, increases greenhouse gas emissions and threatens rivers and forests. Some projects are massive open-pit mines, and the process of separating oil from sand can generate lake-sized pools of toxic sludge.

Meanwhile, China's growing economy is hungry for Canadian oil. Chinese state-owned companies have invested more than $16 billion in Canadian energy in the past two years, state-controlled Sinopec has a stake in the pipeline, and if it is built, Chinese investment in Alberta oil sands is sure to boom.

"They (the Chinese) wonder why it's not being built already," said Wenran Jiang, an energy expert and professor at the University of Alberta.

In a report on China's stake in Canadian energy, Jiang notes that if every Chinese burned oil at the rate Americans do, China's daily consumption would equal the entire world's.

Harper is set to visit China next month. After Obama first delayed the Keystone pipeline in November, Harper told Chinese President Hu Jintao at the Pacific Rim summit in Hawaii that Canada would like to sell more oil to China, and the Canadian prime minister filled in Obama on what he said.

Jiang reads that to mean "China has become leverage."

But oil analysts say Alberta has enough oil to meet both countries' needs, and the pipeline's capacity of 525,000 barrels a day would amount to less than 6 percent of China's current needs.

"I don't think U.S. policymakers view China's investment in the Canadian oil sands as a threat," says David Goldwyn, a former energy official in the Obama administration.

"In the short term it provides additional investment to increase Canadian supply; that's a good thing. Longer-term, if Canadian oil goes to China, that means China's demand is being met by a non-OPEC country, and that's a good thing for global oil supply. Right now we are spending an awful lot of time finding ways for China to meet its demand from some place other than Iran. Canada would be a great candidate."

Pipelines are rarely rejected in Canada, but Murray Minchin, an environmentalist who lives near Kitamaat Village, says this time he and other opponents are determined to block construction. "They are ready to put themselves in front of something to stop the equipment," Minchin said. "Even if it gets the green light it doesn't mean it's getting done."

Enbridge is confident the pipeline will be built and claims about 40 percent of First Nation communities living along the route have entered into a long-term equity partnership with Enbridge. The communities together are being offered 10 percent ownership of the pipeline, meaning those which sign on will share an expected $400 million over 30 years.

But of the 43 eligible communities, only one went public with its acceptance and it has since reneged after fierce protests from its members.

Janet Holder, the Enbridge executive overseeing the project, says pipeline leaks are not inevitable, new technologies make monitoring more reliable, and tugboats will guide tankers through the Douglas Channel.

At the Kitamaat hearings, speakers ranged from Ellis Ross, chief of the Haisla First Nation in British Columbia, to Dieter Wagner, a German-born Canadian, retired scientist and veteran sailor who called the Douglas Channel "an insane route to take."

Ross used to work on whale-watching boats, and refers to himself as a First Nation, a term applicable to individuals as well as groups. He testified that the tanker port would go up just as marine life decimated by industrial pollution was making a comeback in his territory.

He held the audience spellbound as he described an extraordinary nighttime encounter last summer with a whale that was "logging"—the half-doze that passes for sleep in the cetacean world.

"...Midnight I hear this whale and it's right outside the soccer field. ... It's waterfront, but I can hear this whale, and I can't understand why it's so close, something's got to be wrong.

"So I walk down there with my daughter, my youngest daughter, and I try to flash a light down there, and quickly figured out it's not in trouble, it's sleeping. It's resting right outside our soccer field.

"You can't imagine what that means to a First Nation that's watched his territory get destroyed over 60 years. You can't imagine the feeling."

Overdrive

Gen Y auto buyers surveyed prefer hybrids packed with technology

By JERRY HIRSCH
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—When it comes to their autos, members of Generation Y want hybrid cars stuffed with technology.

They could be the "generation that leads us away from traditional gasoline-powered vehicles," said Craig Giffi, the Deloitte automotive consultant who oversees the accounting firm's annual survey of Generation Y auto consumers.

Deloitte defines the Generation Y group as those 19 to 31 years old.

Automakers seem to be targeting this market with many of their latest offerings.

At the North American International Auto Show in Detroit last week, Toyota Motor Corp. displayed a tiny new Prius hybrid that will reach Toyota showrooms this spring with the lowest price and highest fuel economy of any hybrid that can't be plugged into a wall socket.

The Prius c will have a list price starting at less than $19,000 and a highway driving fuel economy rating of 53 miles per gallon.

Ford Motor Co. unveiled a standard hybrid and a plug-in version of its next-generation Fusion sedan that goes on sale this year. Honda Motor Co. showed a concept version of its new Accord sedan, which also will be sold as a plug-in hybrid. Even BMW got into the act, showing off a hybrid version of its latest-generation 3 Series sports sedan that will go on sale this year.

General Motors Co., meanwhile, is offering versions of the Chevrolet Malibu, Buick LaCrosse and Buick Regal sedans with small hybrid systems designed to boost fuel economy.

"The cost of ownership is much more important to Gen Y consumers than their parents, and the big variable there is fuel efficiency," said Erich J. Merkle, Ford's U.S. sales analyst.

According to the Deloitte survey, 59 percent of Generation Y respondents said they preferred an "electrified vehicle" over any other type of car or truck. They generally defined "electrified" as a hybrid gasoline-electric vehicle. Just 2 percent said they wanted a pure battery electric vehicle, which reflects the small number of such cars that people are purchasing. Just 37 percent of the respondents preferred vehicles with the traditional gasoline-only powertrain.

That preference for hybrid vehicles paints Generation Y consumers in the U.S. as "game changers," Giffi said.

"At nearly 80 million strong, they are one of the biggest automobile buying market segments and the largest consumer segment since the baby boomers," he said.

About 1 of 4 new automobiles sold this year, and 40 percent of vehicles sold in the next 10 years, will be purchased by Generation Y consumers, according to the consulting firm.

The auto industry is expected to sell about 13.8 million vehicles this year, including purchases by rental companies, commercial customers and government agencies. The consumer portion of the market will account for a little less than 11 million vehicles.

Generation Y buyers say they are also looking for cars rich in technology—not unlike their smartphones, the survey found.

Almost three quarters—73 percent—surveyed said they liked touch-screen interfaces in their cars. Generation Y consumers also ranked smartphone applications as highly desirable in a new automobile and they want to be able to purchase additional accessories and upgrades for their automobiles on an ongoing basis in the same manner that they can add new applications to their phones and tablets.

"When it comes to cars, they want something that will work with the technology that they carry around in their pockets every day," Merkle said. "To many younger folks, cellphones are just as important as the cars that they drive."

Ford's market research indicates that Generation Y buyers are most likely to purchase a compact car such as a Ford Focus, Chevrolet Cruze or Hyundai Elantra because they like the combination of their small size and fuel economy. But older Generation Y buyers also will look at mid-size sedans and small sport utility vehicles because they might have small children and need more space.

MCT

A customer checks out a new Chevrolet.

Top car brands' lead shrinks in consumer perception survey

By JERRY HIRSCH
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—The top car brands seem to be losing their importance in the eyes of consumers as competition across the industry heats up.

For years, Toyota, Ford, and Honda have been the top names in Consumer Reports' annual Car-Brand Perception Survey. They are still at the top, but they have seen double-digit drops in their scores. That has narrowed the gap between the top names and middle-of-the-road car brands.

"Dramatic events in the automotive industry seem to be affecting how consumers view auto brands," said Jeff Bartlett, Consumer Reports' deputy editor for autos online. "It is harder for a single brand to stand out among the competitive field. Many brands are starting to get strong in the qualities we are asking about."

Consumer Reports' 2012 Car-Brand Perception Survey measures how consumers perceive each brand in seven categories: safety, quality, value, performance, environmentally friendly/green, design/style, and technology/innovation.

The magazine combines those factors to calculate a total brand-perception score. The scores are a measure of a brand's image in consumers' minds but are not meant to reflect issues such as quality, reliability or results from Consumer Reports testing of vehicles.

"Brand perception can be influenced by many things, from professional road tests to marketing. Word of mouth from friends and neighbors can be a slower-moving though influential contributor as ownership transitions from the initial honeymoon phase to the seven-year itch," Bartlett said.

As in past years, Toyota was ranked at the top for overall brand perception, although it slipped a significant 17 points to 131 points from last year's survey results.

The decline illustrates the narrowing of brand perception.

Toyota's score was 96 points more than Hyundai, which ranked 19th and was exactly in the middle of the 38 brands scored this year. A year ago, Toyota scored 147 points, 103 points above Hyundai, also the middle brand last year. And Toyota's score was down significantly from 196 points in the 2010 rankings.

Bartlett observed that the gap between the top brand this year and No. 10 is 80 points. Last year, it was 97 points.

Other top brands—Ford, Honda and BMW—saw their scores drop more than 20 points. The two leading General Motors brands, Cadillac and Chevrolet, did relatively better with only single-digit decreases.

Brands that score well in Consumer Reports physical tests often lagged in perception scores.

"Acura and Infiniti make good vehicles with many positive attributes, but they just don't stand out with consumers," Bartlett said.

The top 10 brands and their scores were Toyota, 131; Ford, 121; Honda, 94; Chevrolet, 92; Mercedes-Benz, 84; BMW, 69; Volvo, 67; Cadillac, 63; Lexus, 54; Tesla, 51.

The 10 lowest brands, starting with the absolute lowest, were Saab, 5 (in bankruptcy and probably going out of business); Fiat, 7; Mini, 7; Mitsubishi, 7; Land Rover, 8; Mercury, 10 (discontinued by Ford and no longer sold); Suzuki, 11; Jeep, 12; Infiniti, 16; Mazda, 16.

Idled cars need a little attention

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

QUESTION: A couple months ago I had a seizure. An MRI found a nonmalignant tumor, and the operation a month later was a success. But because of the seizure, my driver's license was revoked for six months until they see if I will have a recurrence of the seizure.

From time to time a friend or relative will drive one of our two cars—a 2005 Dodge Caravan and a 2010 Volkswagen diesel Jetta—but the cars can sit for days or even weeks without being driven. Both do start up immediately when called to service.

I'm sure other people have cars they may not use for short or long periods of time. What precautions do you suggest? Should I start the cars and just let them idle once a week?—Craig

ANSWER: Congratulations on your medical recovery. It sounds like the usage of your two cars is working out OK; the batteries holding up and they are getting some usage, which is better than none. My only concern is the fuel becoming stale.

Vehicles parked more than three weeks at a time can benefit from the use of a plug-in float charger or solar panel, if parked in adequate sun. A float charger is a smart trickle charger that provides just enough battery charge to offset parasitic losses while the vehicle sits. These run from $10 to about $20. Both take just a moment to hook up and plug in to a typical wall outlet. If the car isn't near an electrical outlet but can be parked so the windshield sees six or more hours of direct sun, a 1.5-watt solar panel, about 6 inches by 15 inches in size, about $20, should adequately do the job. Larger 5-watt panels, about $50, work better but should be used with a charge controller —which runs about $10-$15—to avoid overcharging the battery. Both sizes are widely available.

Gasoline begins to go stale in a little over a month, and I'd recommend treating what's in the two tanks with some Sta-Bil fuel treatment. If either of the vehicles is unused for more than a month, it's not a bad idea to run the engine perhaps 15 minutes and drive back and forth a bit in the driveway to exercise the brakes. Be sure to check tire pressure before anyone takes either vehicle out on the road.

■■■

Q: Your columns have proven useful, but we, and possibly others, are confused as to whether we should use miles, time or some combination to schedule maintenance, especially of various fluids. We have a 6-year-old Toyota Tacoma with 31,000 miles and a 5-year-old Toyota Avalon with 21,000 miles. We change oil and filter every 6 months, usually with less than 3 thousand miles. If the other older folks are anything like our friends, there are many with this question.

A: I believe miles are more important than months, and it's the kind of miles that really matter. If your trips are of less than a half-hour of mostly continuous run time, I'd stick with the every-six-month regimen. If most trips involve greater than a half-hour run time, which allows the engine to fully warm up and boil off contaminants from the motor oil, I'd feel comfortable stretching the time to 12 months between oil changes. Take a look at the inside of the oil filler cap. If the bottom of the cap shows more than a little milky residue or moisture, shorten the oil change intervals.

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at under-the-hood@earthlink.net; he cannot make personal replies.

Life&Style

Davis, Dujardin win lead honors at SAG awards

By DAVID GERMAIN
AP MOVIE WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Viola Davis and Octavia Spencer were the maids of honor at Sunday's Screen Actors Guild Awards, where their Deep South drama "The Help" won them acting prizes and earned the trophy for overall cast performance.

Davis won as best actress and Spencer as supporting actress for "The Help," while Jean Dujardin was named best actor for the silent film "The Artist" and Christopher Plummer took the supporting-actor award for the father-son tale "Beginners."

The wins boost the actors' prospects for the same honors at the Feb. 26 Academy Awards.

In "The Help," Davis and Spencer play black maids going public with uneasy truths about their white employers in 1960s Mississippi.

"I just have to say that the stain of racism and sexism is not just for people of color or women. It's all of our burden, all of us," Davis said, accepting the ensemble prize on behalf of her "The Help" co-stars.

Accepting her best-actress award, Davis singled out two performers in the audience who inspired her early in her career: "The Help" co-star Cicely Tyson and Meryl Streep, Davis' co-star in the 2008 drama "Doubt" and one of the nominees she beat out for the SAG prize. Streep had been nominated as Margaret Thatcher in "The Iron Lady," a role that won her the dramatic actress award at the Golden Globes over Davis.

A French film star who is a newcomer to Hollywood's awards scene with "The Artist," Dujardin played a silent-era screen idol fallen on hard times as talking pictures take over in the late 1920s.

"I was a very bad student. I didn't listen in class. I was always dreaming," Dujardin said. "My teachers called me 'Jean of the Moon,' and I realize now that I never stopped dreaming. Thank you very much. Thank you for this dream."

Plummer would become the oldest actor ever to win an Oscar at age 82, two years older than Jessica Tandy when she won best actress for "Driving Miss Daisy."

Backstage, Plummer joked when asked if he would like to win an Oscar, an honor so elusive during his esteemed 60-year career that he did not even receive his first Academy Award nomination until two years ago, for "The Last Station."

"No, I think it's frightfully boring," Plummer said. "That's an awful question. Listen, we don't go into this business preoccupied by awards. If we did, we wouldn't last five minutes."

Spencer, a veteran actress who had toiled in small TV and movie parts previously, had a breakout role in "The Help" as a brassy maid whose mouth continually gets her in trouble.

"I'm going to dedicate this to the downtrodden, the under-served, the underprivileged, overtaxed—whether emotionally, physically or financially," Spencer said.

On the television side, comedy series awards went to "Modern Family" for best ensemble; Alec Baldwin as best actor for "30 Rock"; and Betty White as best actress for "Hot in Cleveland."

"You can't name me, without naming those other wonderful women on `Hot in Cleveland,'" the 90-year-old White said. "This nomination belongs to four of us. Please, please know that I'm dealing them right in with this. I'm not going to let them keep this, but I'll let them see it."

The TV drama show winners were: Jessica Lange as best actress for "American Horror Story"; and Steve Buscemi as best actor for "Boardwalk Empire," which also won the ensemble prize.

For TV movie or miniseries, Kate Winslet won as best actress for "Mildred Pierce," while Paul Giamatti was named best actor for "Too Big to Fail."

Before the official ceremony, the Screen Actors Guild presented its honor for best film stunt ensemble to "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2." The TV stunt award went to "Game of Thrones."

The winners at the SAG ceremony often go on to earn Oscars. All four acting recipients at SAG last year later took home Oscars—Colin Firth for "The King's Speech," Natalie Portman for "Black Swan" and Christian Bale and Melissa Leo for "The Fighter."

The same generally holds true for the weekend's other big Hollywood honors, the Directors Guild of America Awards, where Michel Hazanavicius won the feature-film prize Saturday for "The Artist." The Directors Guild winner has gone on to earn the best-director Oscar 57 times in the 63-year history of the union's awards show.

The guild's ensemble prize, considered the ceremony's equivalent of a best-picture honor, has a spotty record at predicting what will win the top award at the Oscars.

While "The King's Speech" won both honors a year ago, the SAG ensemble recipient has gone on to claim the top Oscar only eight times in the 16 years since the guild added the category.

Though "The Help" won the ensemble prize this time, "The Artist" and George Clooney's family drama "The Descendants" are considered stronger contenders for the best-picture Oscar.

Both "The Artist" and "The Descendants" also were nominated for writing and directing Oscars, categories where serious best-picture candidates generally need to be in the running. "The Help" missed out on nominations in both of those Oscar categories.

Mary Tyler Moore received the guild's lifetime-achievement award, an honor presented to her by Dick Van Dyke, her co-star on the 1960s sit-com "The Dick Van Dyke Show."

SAG President Ken Howard put in a plug during the show for the guild's planned merger with another Hollywood union, the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. The boards of both groups have approved the merger, and ballots will be sent to members of each union.

"As one union, SAG-AFTRA will support a future of great entertainment for all of us," Howard said.

AP

The cast of "The Help" accepts the award for outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture at the 18th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards on Sunday Jan. 29, 2012 in Los Angeles. From left, Sissy Spacek, Ahna O'Reilly, Octavia Spencer, Emma Stone, Viola Davis, Cicely Tyson, Jessica Chastain, Mary Steenburgen.

WINNERS' LIST

A complete list of winners at Sunday's 18th annual Screen Actors Guild Awards:

MOVIES:

- **Actor:** Jean Dujardin, "The Artist"
- **Actress:** Viola Davis, "The Help"
- **Supporting actor:** Christopher Plummer, "Beginners."
- **Supporting actress:** Octavia Spencer, "The Help."
- **Cast:** "The Help"
- **Stunt ensemble:** "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2."

TELEVISION:

- **Actor in a movie or miniseries:** Paul Giamatti, "Too Big to Fail."
- **Actress in a movie or miniseries:** Kate Winslet, "Mildred Pierce."
- **Actor in a drama series:** Steve Buscemi, "Boardwalk Empire"
- **Actress in a drama series:** Jessica Lange, "American Horror Story"
- **Actor in a comedy series:** Alec Baldwin, "30 Rock."
- **Actress in a comedy series:** Betty White, "Hot in Cleveland."
- **Drama series cast:** "Boardwalk Empire"
- **Comedy series cast:** "Modern Family."
- **Stunt ensemble:** "Game of Thrones."

- **Life Achievement:** Mary Tyler Moore

Mary Tyler Moore honored for lifetime achievement

By BETH HARRIS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Mary Tyler Moore made it after all.

The 75-year-old actress, who as Mary Richards "turned the world on with her smile" in her groundbreaking 1970s sitcom "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," received the lifetime achievement award at Sunday night's 18th annual Screen Actors Guild Awards.

"MTM. There's probably not a person in the civilized world who doesn't know what that means," said Dick Van Dyke, her former co-star in the equally appealing 1960s sit-com "The Dick Van Dyke show," as he introduced her.

He noted Moore's achievements as an Oscar-nominated actress, a dancer and a Hollywood executive whose MTM Enterprises has produced several other hit TV shows.

As she accepted her award, Moore revealed how the civilized world almost never did hear of MTM, who was told in the opening theme song of her show each week, "You're gonna make it after all."

When she entered show business at age 18 in 1955, Moore said, there were already six others Mary Moores in the Screen Actors Guild.

Told to change her name, she quickly added Tyler, the middle name of both her and her father, George.

"I was Mary Tyler Moore. I spoke it out loud. Mary Tyler Moore. It sounded right so I wrote it down on the form, and it looked right," she said. "It was right. SAG was happy, my father was happy, and tonight, after having the privilege of working in this business among the most creative and talented people imaginable, I too am happy, after all."

Before the awards show Van Dyke had stopped on the red carpet to remember working with Moore on his show.

"She was 23 and had never done comedy. I never saw somebody pick it up so fast. I still have a crush on her," he said.

The show's audience, including Moore's former co-star Betty White, showered both her and Van Dyke with standing ovations, leading Van Dyke to remind them, "I'm just a presenter."

Van Dyke and Moore were so believable as husband and wife Rob and Laura Petrie on "The Dick Van Dyke Show" that many viewers thought they were married in real life. As Laura Petrie, Moore also turned Capri pants into a fashion trend during the show's run.

Van Dyke noted they fit her so well, which created such a concern during that more conservative era, that she was limited to wearing them in only one scene per show.

AP

Mary Tyler Moore accepts the Life Achievement award at the 18th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards on Sunday Jan. 29, 2012 in Los Angeles.

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The Grey

Friday		4:00	7:00	10:00
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Monday thru Thursday		4:00	7:00	

Liam Neeson, Frank Grillo
Adventure • Rated R

Synopsis

Liam Neeson stars in producer/director Joe Carnahan's tense adventure thriller about a group of tough-as-nails oil rig workers who must fight for their lives in the Alaskan wilderness after their airplane crashes miles from civilization. With supplies running short and hungry wolves closing in, the shaken survivors face a fate worse than death if they don't act fast.

Man On A Ledge

Friday		4:30	7:30	9:50
Saturday	1:30	4:30	7:30	9:50
Sunday	1:30	4:30	7:30	
Monday thru Thursday		4:30	7:30	

Sam Worthington, Elizabeth Banks
Drama, Thriller • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

An NYPD hostage negotiator (Elizabeth Banks) attempts to talk cop-turned-fugitive Nick Cassidy (Sam Worthington) down from a high ledge, but she learns that he may have a hidden motive for threatening to take his own life.

One For The Money

Friday		4:20	7:20	9:35
Saturday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:35
Sunday	1:20	4:20	7:20	
Monday thru Thursday		4:20	7:20	

Katherine Heigl, Jason O'Mara
Crime, Comedy, Thriller • Rated PG 13

★ ★ ★

Underworld: Awakening

Friday		4:25	7:25	9:40
Saturday	1:25	4:25	7:25	9:40
Sunday	1:25	4:25	7:25	
Monday thru Thursday		4:25	7:25	

Kate Beckinsale, Stephen Rea
Horror • Rated R

Red Tails

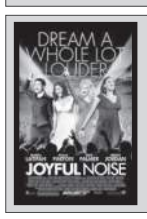
Friday		4:05	7:05	9:45
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:45
Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	
Monday thru Thursday		4:05	7:05	

Cuba Gooding, Jr., Terrence Howard
War • Rated PG 13

Haywire

Friday		4:10	7:10	9:30
Saturday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:30
Sunday	1:10	4:10	7:10	
Monday thru Thursday		4:10	7:10	

Gina Carano, Michael Douglas
Thriller, Spy film • Rated R



Joyful Noise

Friday		4:15	7:15	
Saturday	1:15	4:15	7:15	
Sunday	1:15	4:15		
Monday thru Thursday		4:15		

Queen Latifah, Dolly Parton
Comedy • Rated PG 13

Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol

Friday				9:55
Saturday				9:55
Sunday			7:15	
Monday thru Thursday			7:15	

Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner
Spy film, Action • Rated PG 13

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Neeson's 'The Grey' tops box office with $20M

AP

In this film image released by Open Road Films, from left, Dallas Roberts, Dermot Mulroney, Liam Neeson, and Nonso Anozie are shown in a scene from "The Grey."

NEW YORK (AP)—Beware the Liam in Winter. Liam Neeson's "The Grey" topped the weekend box office with $20 million, according to studio estimates Sunday, continuing the actor's success as an action star in the winter months.

The Alaskan survivalist thriller opened above expectations with a performance on par with previous Neeson thrillers "Taken" and "Unknown." Those films, both January-February releases, opened with $24.7 million and $21.9 million, respectively.

But the R-rated "The Grey," which has received good reviews, drove home the strong appeal of Neeson, action star. It's an unlikely turn for the 59-year-old Neeson, previously better known for his dramatic performances, like those in "Schindler's List" and "Kinsey."

"Liam is a true movie star, period," said Tom Ortenberg, CEO of Open Road Films. It's the second release for the newly formed distributor, created by theater chains AMC and Regal.

"My guess is that Liam Neeson in action thrillers would work just about any time of year."

January is often a dumping ground for less-stellar releases, a tradition held up by two badly reviewed new wide releases: "Man on a Ledge," with Sam Worthington, and "One for the Money" with Katherine Heigl.

"One for the Money" fared better, earning $11.8 million, while "Man on a Ledge" opened with $8.3 million. Last week's box-office leader, "Underworld: Awakenings," Sony's Screen Gem's latest installment in its vampire series, came in second with $12.5 million, bringing its cumulative total to $45.1 million.

The unexpectedly large haul for "The Grey," strong holdovers (such as the George Lucas-produced World War II action film "Red Tails," which earned $10.4 million in its second week) and the bump for Oscar contending films following Tuesday's nominations added up to a good weekend for Hollywood. The box office was up about 15 percent on the corresponding weekend last year.

So far, every weekend this year has been an "up" weekend, after a somewhat dismal fourth quarter in 2011.

1. "**The Grey,**" $20 million.
2. "**Underworld: Awakening,**" $12.5 million.
3. "**One for the Money,**" $11.8 million.
4. "**Red Tails,**" $10.4 million.
5. "**Man on a Ledge,**" $8.3 million.
6. "**Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close,**" $7.1 million.
7. "**The Descendants,**" $6.6 million.
8. "**Contraband,**" $6.5 million.
9. "**Beauty and the Beast,**" $5.3 million.
10. "**Haywire,**" $4 million.

"`Mission: Impossible,' I think, really helped reinvigorate the marketplace, and that's carried over into the first part of the year," said Paul Dergarabedian, box-office analyst for Hollywood.com. "That's good news for Hollywood after the downtrending box office of 2011."

Oscar favorites "The Descendants," "Hugo" and "The Artist" sought to capitalize on their recent Academy Awards nominations. Each expanded to more theaters and saw an uptick in business.

Fox Searchlight's "The Descendants," which is nominated for five Oscars including best picture, added 1,441 screens in its 11th week of release. It added $6.6 million and has now made $58.8 million, making it one of Fox Searchlight's most successful releases.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Hollywood.com. Final figures will be released Monday.

MINISTRY OF GOSSIP

Cher is not dead, but alas, Kim Kardashian was not certain

Cher is not dead, folks, but merely the victim of the latest Twitter death hoax—a hoax enhanced by Kim Kardashian temporarily spreading the uncertainty to her nearly 13 million followers.

Early Friday morning, a Twitter user who goes by the name "Lorraine Star" was bragging, "I started the Cher Trending topic Because I'm God." Seems Star on Thursday night first tweeted "Cher Died, follow me" at Justin Bieber, then sent out a fake retweet of a fake CNN message, "American recording artist Cher dies at 65 years old. Found dead in Malibu home."

Twitter being Twitter, and @Lorraine—star having almost 15,000 followers for whatever reason, the hoax caught on and became a trending topic.

"Did I juist (sic) hear Cher has passed away? Is this real? OMG," Kardashian said. "I hope this is a twitter joke and not true. I don't see it on the news anywhere. I'm praying its not true..."

Guess those prayers paid off for Kimmy, who next said, "Can't believe people would make up a sick joke like Cher died. These people need to get a life! Thanks twitter for clearing that up!"

Of course, while Kardashian was going through her 140-character voyage of discovery about Cher's health, she had actually passed along the "sick joke" to any of her 12,800,000 or so followers who might have been watching at the time. Oops.

As one tweep said in response, "Can't believe u would immediately start tweeting about it before finding out facts."

Cher, who turns 66 in May, has not Tweeted since Sunday; however, a good friend, jewelry designer Loree Rodkin, set the record straight Thursday night, posting "Whoever started that stupid rumor needs to have their face dragged across concrete… #cher is FINE," and adding later, "she's so NOT dead." ***(Los Angeles Times)***

Halle Berry pulled into Gabriel Aubry investigation

Halle Berry has been pulled into the mess that's been bubbling recently between her ex, Gabriel Aubry, and Alliance Kamdem, a nanny who last week alleged battery by Aubry.

The male model allegedly pushed Kamdem into a door while Nahla, Berry and Aubry's 3-year-old daughter, was in her arms, according to a police report obtained by TMZ. Aubry and the nanny had quarreled that day, Jan. 18, over Nahla missing school, the report said.

A judge on Tuesday rejected Kamdem's request for a restraining order. Before the alleged incident, she was required by court order to be at each parent's house—depending on who had custody at the time—from 12:30 p.m. until Nahla is put to bed, the website On the Red Carpet reported. The judge, who hasn't been the regular judge in the case, decided Tuesday to leave the orders in place until the regular judge can revisit the situation Monday.

Berry was visited by reps from the Department of Child and Family Services on Wednesday, TMZ reported; interviews of both parents are done routinely when abuse or neglect is being investigated. Aubry is reportedly being investigated for misdemeanor battery and child endangerment.

Custody of Nahla has been a matter of contention between the two since they split in April 2010. Berry, who has famously said she'll never marry again, recently received an emerald-and-diamond ring from beau Olivier Martinez. ***(Los Angeles Times)***

Source: Ministry of Gossip: http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/gossip/

Madonna says charity plans 10 schools in Malawi

By NEKESA MUMBI MOODY
AP MUSIC WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Nearly six years after it was created, Madonna's Raising Malawi charity is set to break ground on the construction of schools in the impoverished country, but they will be run by the local community, not the superstar's organization.

According to organizers, work on the first school will start on March 30 in the Kasungu area, about 80 miles (130 kilometers) from the capital of Lilongwe, and all of the schools should be built by June 2013. Raising Malawi is providing $300,000 to the nongovernmental organization buildOn to develop the schools. They'll serve about 1,000 boys and girls in the southern African nation.

"This remains a very big priority in my life and I am excited that with the help of buildOn we can maintain our ongoing commitment to move forward efficiently," Madonna said in a statement provided to The Associated Press.

Raising Malawi had originally intended to build all-girls schools that the organization would run. But it faced several obstacles in its goal, including complaints from some local farmers that they had been moved off land that Raising Malawi intended to use for its mission. Raising Malawi also had difficulty getting title to the land and there were concerns about the high costs of construction.

AP

Madonna attends the premiere of "W.E.", hosted by the Weinstein Company and The Cinema Society, in New York, Monday, Jan. 23, 2012.

The new plan calls for "simple structures" that will be more practical and better serve Raising Malawi's original mission, said Trevor Neilson, who is helping to direct the project as partner of the Global Philanthropy Group. The approach will allow the program to serve twice as many children as before, Madonna said.

"I have learned a great deal over the last few years and feel so much more confident that we can reach out goals to educate children in Malawi, especially young girls, in a much more efficient and practical way," she said. Madonna has adopted two children from Malawi.

BuildOn has already built more than 50 schools in Malawi and 427 schools worldwide.

"For schools to be successful, they need to have community ownership and leadership," Neilson said in an interview Friday. "Raising Malawi shouldn't be running schools in Malawi. Local communities in Malawi should be running those schools, so that's a big part of the shift."

BuildOn has been working in Malawi for almost 20 years, said spokeswoman Carrie Pena. The organization works closely with the community, and locals even volunteer the labor to build the schools, according to Pena.

"It's absolutely a community-owned school," she said.

Neilson praised Madonna for sticking with her plan to build schools for Malawi's children despite several setbacks for the star, who is the director of the new movie "W.E.," out next week, and is this year's Super Bowl performer. Madonna brought in Global Philanthropy to work with Raising Malawi more than a year ago and removed the involvement of the Kabbalah Centre. She has practiced Kabbalah, a form of Jewish mysticism.

"When the previous management team had those problems, I think a lot of people thought Madonna would give up," Neilson said "It would have been understandable, but instead she's going to be reaching twice as many kids."

Lambert postpones Fla. show after friend's death

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Miranda Lambert has rescheduled her Friday concert in Tallahassee, Fla., to attend the funeral of a close friend.

A news release Sunday says Lambert's childhood friend Mark "Tex" Adams was killed in a traffic accident in Florida this week. He was sideswiped by a vehicle after he had pulled over to help another driver. It's the second loss of a close friend in recent weeks for Lambert, whose father-in-law, Dick Shelton, died Jan. 17.

Lambert said in a tweet Thursday: "I have lost a friend I've had since 3rd grade today in a tragic accident. When will this pain end. Please pray for peace."

Lambert's "On Fire" tour will now stop in Tallahassee on May 17.

Actress rose to the occasion for 'Man on a Ledge' role

By RICK BENTLEY
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

LOS ANGELES—With her sparkling blue eyes, blond hair and model-like body, it would be easy to dismiss Elizabeth Banks as just another pretty Hollywood actress.

It only takes a few seconds of talking about her latest movie, "Man on a Ledge," to realize she's a driven, determined and realistic person when it comes to the career she's selected.

"I just figured out that you don't get what you don't ask for. All they can do is say no. If you know that going in then that's all right," Banks says.

That's why Banks went after action-movie roles when good comedy roles dried up. She landed the serious role of police negotiator Lydia Mercer in "Man on a Ledge," playing opposite Sam Worthington.

Filming was done on a set 8 feet off the ground and on a real 27th floor ledge. Banks never balked at doing any of the stunts, including climbing onto the real ledge.

"One of the real fun things about this film was everyone's commitment for shooting it for real. It was one of the reasons I wanted to do it. I liked the idea of running around with a gun, chasing bad guys and doing my own stunt work," Banks says.

Banks doesn't have a fear of heights, but she has what she calls a "fear of human error." She praises the "Man on a Ledge" stunt team—but that didn't stop her from checking her harness 15 times.

Banks wasn't merely motivated by the action. Her character carries a lot of personal and professional baggage into the situation.

"I tend to find in these sorts of things that the woman has to be particularly bitchy or cold. This character felt very authentic to me," Banks says. "I also liked (that) the role felt gender-neutral. It didn't matter she was a woman. I think it added something to it that she's female and clearly they wanted a little romance. You got Sam Worthington on the big screen you might as well give him a love interest."

Banks, who is best known for lighter projects like "Scrubs," "30 Rock" and "Zack and Miri Make a Porno," doesn't plan to permanently trade laughs and giggles for fights and felons. She wishes there were more comedy roles, and she realized after seeing last year's comedy dry spell that the good ones are rare.

AP

Actress Elizabeth Banks attends a special screening of "Haywire" hosted by the Cinema Society at the Landmark Sunshine Cinema on Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2012 in New York.

She's trying to create more funny movies through her own production company.

"I have a production company because this is the only job I know and this is then only career I have and the only industry I have worked in and the only contacts that I have. Why wouldn't I produce? Great ideas can come from anywhere. I love storytelling. I'm a trained storyteller. I believe that's what actors do," Banks says. "But, as an actor, you come into the process last. All I get to do in this film is play Lydia Mercer and I don't even control that because they edit the (expletive) out of it.

"As a producer, I get to tell stories that I care about in a way that I want to. I get to shape them. I get to chose the collaborators and that's really gratifying as a storyteller."

Banks didn't start the production company just to create projects for herself. But she does have a project in the works with Disney for which she would play Tinker Bell in a live-action movie. In the story, Tinker Bell gets tossed out of Neverland and has to fend for herself in the real world. Banks loves the idea of playing Tink, but she remains very realistic about the project.

"We are in the script stage and everyone is really excited, but that doesn't mean anything," she says. "You might as well not even write it down."

Emailed photo of ailing mom is reason to restrict visitors

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: Recently my 80-year-old mother was admitted to the hospital, gravely ill. She had been undergoing chemotherapy and caught double pneumonia. My 36-year-old niece went to visit Mama, took pictures of her lying in her hospital bed and emailed the photos to everyone.

It was shocking and upsetting seeing my mother this way. Many of the people who received the photos had not been able to visit her. Abby, what's your opinion on this, and how should it have been handled?

SINCERELY UPSET IN FLORIDA

DEAR SINCERELY UPSET: I don't blame you for being upset. What your niece did was a gross invasion of privacy. Is this how your mother would have wanted people to see her? If the answer is no, your niece owes your mother an apology.

If your mother is still hospitalized, talk to the nurse in charge of the unit she's in and give her a list of visitors who should have access to her. Explain why you want visitation restricted, and in the future your mother's privacy will be assured.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My sister's husband died suddenly three years ago. "Pamela" now says she's in love with a 60-year-old man I'll call "Mickey," whose company is doing construction work on her home. She has put on a new roof, siding and added a deck, and the jobs are not ending. Next on the schedule is a shed and a new coat of paint for the inside of the house.

Friends and family are concerned that Pamela is scheduling more jobs as a way to see Mickey. When I pointed out that he hasn't even invited her out for coffee, she claimed they have a "relationship" because he hugged her, kissed her on the cheek and told her, "You're my girlfriend."

Pamela has invited Mickey to family dinners and events, but he turns her down because "he's visiting relatives out of town." He has never invited her to go anywhere.

My sister should be ready to date now, but no one lives up to this man. None of us have met him, and we're worried she is just imagining there's a relationship. What can we do before Pamela goes broke or crashes emotionally?

SOMETHING'S MISSING IN NEW JERSEY

DEAR SOMETHING'S MISSING: Do you know the name of Mickey's company? Start checking him out. Does he have a contractor's license? A Facebook page? Does anybody in the lumber or paint business know him? Something does seem fishy. Mickey may be married and your sister may be grasping at straws. But when all is said and done, it is her money.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am a 12-year-old girl who needs your advice. My friend and I went shopping a while back and she lent me money to buy a few things. However, later that day she lost the bag that had my stuff in it at the mall. One day she brought up that I have not paid her back, but I said I don't think I should have to pay her back since she lost the stuff she bought for me. Who do you think is right?

NEEDS ADVICE IN OAKLAND, CALIF.

DEAR NEEDS ADVICE: You are. She's out the money; you're out the "goods." You're even. However, from now on when you buy something, take responsibility for it and keep it in your possession. That way, if something is lost, you will have no one to blame but yourself.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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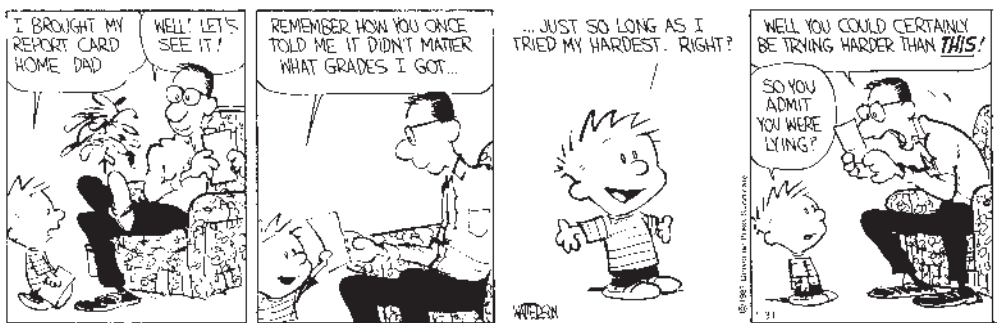
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I BROUGHT MY REPORT CARD HOME DAD
WELL, LET'S SEE IT!
REMEMBER HOW YOU ONCE TOLD ME IT DIDN'T MATTER WHAT GRADES I GOT...
...JUST SO LONG AS I TRIED MY HARDEST. RIGHT?
WATERSON
WELL YOU COULD CERTAINLY BE TRYING HARDER THAN THIS!
SO YOU ADMIT YOU WERE LYING?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

OH MY GOSH, ADAM. ARE YOU OKAY?
I'M FINE. IT'S JUST A KIDNEY STONE.
WHEN CAN YOU LEAVE?
IN A COUPLE HOURS.
DID THEY GIVE YOU ANYTHING FOR THE PAIN?
YEAH. THIS BOOK OF ZIGGY CARTOONS.
WE'VE GOTTA GET NEW INSURANCE.
CAN WE GET THE CALVIN AND HOBBES UPGRADE?
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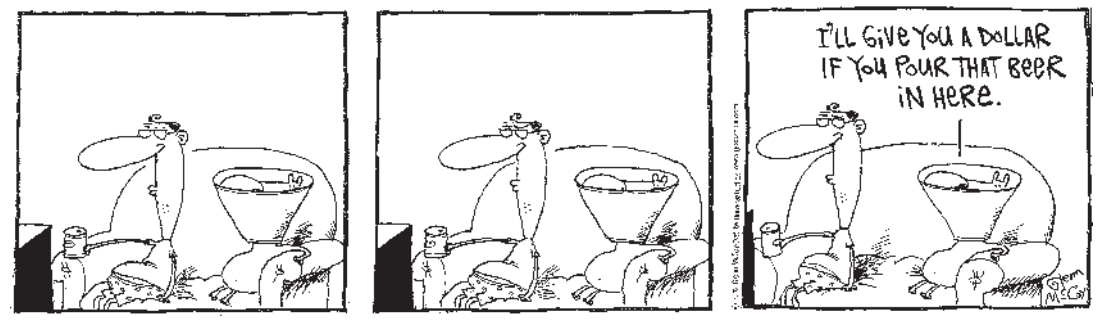
The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 "OK"
5 Unruly crowd
8 Trail
12 Creche trio
13 Flightless bird
14 Great Lake
15 Important campaigns
17 Streamlet
18 Beerlike beverage
19 Triumph
20 Choir's rendition
21 Historic time
22 Greek cross
23 Sucker
26 Processions
30 Grand story
31 Moving truck
32 Use an old phone
33 Video-game parlors
35 Irritable
36 Snapshots, for short
37 Ph. bk. data
38 Inexpensive
41 Atmosphere
42 Eggs
45 Highway
46 Soldiers' "pineapples"
48 Differently
49 And so on (Abbr.)
50 Sweater eater
51 Drenches
52 Old soap ingredient
53 Helen's home

DOWN
1 Village People hit
2 Count's counterpart
3 Malaria symptom
4 — and hers
5 TV, radio, et al.
6 Portent
7 Greyhound vehicle
8 Convinces
9 Met melody
10 Work the soil
11 Steerer's place
16 Wrong
20 Standard
21 Adventures of a sort
22 Catch some rays
23 Pod dweller
24 Spring mo.
25 Twitch
26 — de deux
27 Insult (Sl.)
28 Dine
29 Crafty
31 Annoy
34 Party bowlful
35 Ripped
37 Family member
38 Cox-swain's group
39 Pit
40 Right on the map?
41 Bohemian
42 Stench
43 No from the White House
44 Wan
46 Tooth-paste type
47 Qty.

Solution time: 21 mins.

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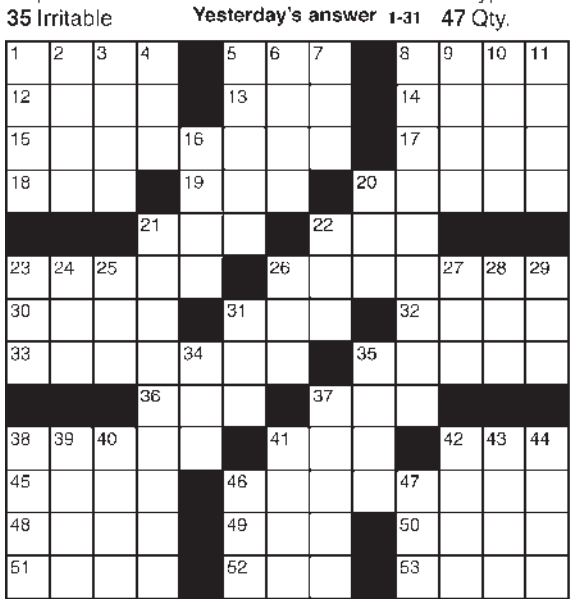
A	G	U	E		N	E	T			N	O	T

Yesterday's answer 1-31



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Justin Timberlake, 31; Portia de Rossi, 39; Minnie Driver, 42; Anthony LaPaglia, 53.

Happy Birthday: You'll be tempted to let your emotions lead the way this year. Caution must be taken or you will miss a chance to do something great. Put your best foot forward and refuse to be daunted by any obstacles you face along the way. Handle challenges head-on and prepare to follow through with your plans. Your numbers are 6, 11, 14, 20, 28, 35, 47.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Accept the inevitable. Avoid anyone bragging or trying to push you into something that doesn't suit your needs. Don't let a problem with someone else fester. Get things out in the open so you can move forward. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You have to watch out for trick questions or being roped into doing something that will overextend you mentally, physically or financially. Exercise and getting into a healthier lifestyle will lift your spirits and bring you greater confidence. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Think first, and follow up by taking action. Impulsiveness will hold you back, but a well thought-out plan will help you gain momentum and success. Don't allow an emotional relationship to stifle your plans. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Ask for a favor and you will be able to make changes at home and stick to a budget you can afford. A unique partnership can help you get ahead. Let your emotions manifest in a passionate display of feelings for someone special. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Easy does it. Make changes, but take baby steps to ensure that you don't go over budget. Closely guard your emotions and your bank card. Do whatever needs to be done without complaining, and rewards will be yours. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Get out and about. A short trip or discussing plans with someone you like to spend time with will pay off. You can build a strong connection and find new ways to partner with people who share your interests. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Put more emphasis on saving, not spending. The more you do to secure your future and stabilize your assets, the more freedom you will have to excel in the future. Avoid anyone trying to sell you a risky investment. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Proceed with caution. Friends, relatives and just about everyone you encounter will be looking to put blame elsewhere. Don't be the scapegoat. Protect your integrity, assets and personal belongings. Creative projects are your best outlet. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't agree to do too much for nothing. You have to set a standard that will help you get ahead, not one that will allow you to be taken advantage of. Strive to offer a service that is in demand. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Stay on top of your plans. Don't leave anything to chance, and avoid anyone who tries to infringe on your generosity. Your hard work will pay off, and you are the one who should benefit, not someone who is along for the ride. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Helping others can make you feel good, but if you are taken for granted, the loss will end up being emotionally costly. Stick to what you know and feel comfortable doing. Plan your strategy and stick to your plans. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Put more thought into your plans for the future. A practical approach to an idea you have will help you raise the support you need to continue. Be sure that you follow all the rules and regulations, or you will face untimely obstacles. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You have strength, courage and determination. You stand behind your beliefs.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	9	4	2	3	6			1
						2		
	8				9			3
		3			1		5	
				2				
	1		7			4		
3			4				7	
		2						
6			1	7	8	5	3	

Difficulty Level ★★ 1/31

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

8	6	5	7	3	1	2	9	4
7	9	3	8	4	2	1	5	6
2	1	4	9	6	5	8	3	7
4	5	1	2	8	3	7	6	9
9	7	2	4	1	6	5	8	3
3	8	6	5	7	9	4	2	1
1	3	8	6	2	4	9	7	5
6	2	9	1	5	7	3	4	8
5	4	7	3	9	8	6	1	2

Difficulty level ★ 1/30

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

LIP READERS **Solution: 12 letters**

C	F	I	P	S	E	N	Ⓢ	R	C	U	E	S	T	G
O	O	A	L	R	E	V	Ⓟ	A	V	I	S	E	M	E
N	C	N	C	A	I	U	Ⓘ	E	E	E	P	A	H	S
F	U	O	C	E	U	V	Ⓛ	L	H	T	U	O	M	T
I	S	I	M	E	S	S	A	C	R	P	R	E	T	U
D	I	T	N	M	N	O	I	T	O	M	E	S	I	R
E	L	S	O	T	O	T	N	V	E	D	A	E	R	E
N	E	U	N	N	E	N	R	G	G	N	I	E	E	S
C	N	B	V	R	G	R	P	A	T	I	E	N	T	S
E	T	J	O	A	T	U	F	U	T	R	A	I	N	E
T	H	E	C	E	W	N	E	A	S	E	N	D	S	U
A	E	C	A	L	I	E	B	E	C	E	I	P	K	G
L	O	T	L	A	N	O	I	S	S	E	F	O	R	P
A	R	A	R	E	D	G	I	V	E	N	O	U	I	N
P	Y	B	G	Y	S	I	G	N	A	L	H	E	L	P

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Body, Brain, Clear, Clues, Common, Concentrate, Confidence, Cues, Faces, Focus, Gestures, Given, Guess, Help, Interface, Learn, Lips, Live, Look, Motion, Mouth, Nonvocal, Palate, Patient, Piece, Private, Professional, Rare, Read, Rise, Seeing, Sends, Shape, Signal, Silent, Song, Subject, Theory, Tongue, Topic, Train, Useful, View, Viseme, Visual

Yesterday's Answer: Metallic

To order THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD volume 25 ($8.95), 27 ($8.95), 28 ($8.95), 31 ($8.95), or 34 ($8.95), send $3.95 for each book ordered (includes postage and handling) to: Puzzle Center, 31 Pine Tree Drive, Lincoln Park, NJ 07035. Or call toll-free, 1-800-642-6480. Check or credit card accepted.

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Saipan Tribune

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
CNMI Judicial Branch

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Judicial Branch is seeking a qualified and reliable individual for the position of:

DEPUTY MARSHAL – Rota, Marshal Service Unit

REQUIREMENTS: Candidate must have a high school diploma or equivalent, a minimum of two (2) years experience in law enforcement and/or one year college level education in criminal justice or related field of study.

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: Candidate must possess a valid CNMI driver's license, current police and traffic clearances, and proof of eligibility to work in the CNMI.

DUTIES: The successful candidate will work under the Chief Marshal on Saipan and be responsible for maintaining order in the courtroom during proceedings and prisoner processing. The successful candidate will conduct inspection and screening of all persons entering the courthouse and prohibit the entrance onto the court's premises of any items that are restricted or prohibited. The successful candidate will monitor court premises; assist in protection and transportation of jurors and other court personnel; have knowledge of and follow courtroom directives; process prisoner documentation; control unruly patrons, serve jury summons and other court processes, and perform other duties on the courthouse premises as assigned.

COMPENSATION AND TENURE: This is an ungraded position appointed and served at the pleasure of the Chief Justice. Salary will be $16,652 for a one year contract.

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This project was supported by Grant Number 2011-DJ-BX-21 awarded to the CNMI Criminal Justice Planning Agency (CJPA) by the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG), Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice and the CNMI Government, and sub-granted by the CJPA Supervisory Council. The Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, coordinates the activities of the following program offices and bureaus: Bureau of Justice Assistance, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, Corrections Program Office, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office for Victims of Crime and Violence Against Women Office. Points of view or opinions contained within this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice or the CJPA Supervisory Council.

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/S/ RITA C. CHONG-DELA CRUZ
ADMINISTRATOR, CRM

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James, Heat escape with win over Bulls

MIAMI (AP)—LeBron James scored 35 points, while reigning NBA MVP Derrick Rose wasted two chances in the final 23 seconds and the Miami Heat escaped with a 97-93 win Sunday over the Chicago Bulls.

Chris Bosh scored 24 points and added 12 rebounds for the Heat, who never trailed—but this win in a rematch of last season's Eastern Conference finals was not easy. Dwyane Wade added 15 points for Miami.

Rose scored 34 points for Chicago, but missed a pair of foul shots that would have given Chicago the lead with 22.7 seconds left. He had made all 29 of his free throws in the fourth quarter this season.

And Rose had a shot to tie in the final seconds, but his short jumper bounced off the rim.

Bosh sealed it with two free throws with 0.1 seconds left for Miami, which has now won five straight over the Bulls—counting the last four games of last season's East title series.

Both sides said this game was supposed to be just another regular-season matchup, one without extra meaning.

So not true.

The Bulls erased what was a 12-point deficit and tied the game at 84 on a brilliant layup by Rose with 6:55 left. The Heat answered with a 10-2 run, before Rose's three-point play with 49.1 seconds left cut the lead to 94-93.

Rose then lost the ball on a drive, but drew contact from Miami's Udonis Haslem and went to the line with Chicago down one with 22.7 seconds left. Rose's first hit the front of the rim and bounced away, and his second rimmed out. James grabbed the rebound and was fouled by Joakim Noah—only to miss both free throws himself.

After the second miss, Bosh appeared to emerge with the rebound, but an inadvertent whistle led to a jump ball. James outleaped Taj Gibson, getting the ball to Mario Chalmers, who made one free throw for a two-point lead.

Chicago wound up getting one last chance with 9.9 seconds left, calling time-out. Naturally, it went to Rose, who weaved his way into the lane—but came up short. Bosh got the rebound, and Miami began celebrating.

Rip Hamilton and Noah each scored 11 for Chicago, which got 10 apiece from Ronnie Brewer and Carlos Boozer.

The Bulls played without forward Luol Deng and guard C.J. Watson, both sidelined with wrist injuries. Watson may be back in Chicago's lineup as early as Monday, and Deng—who has a torn ligament in his left, non-shooting, wrist—is "very close" to a return, Bulls coach Tom Thibodeau said.

Miami took an 11-point lead early in the fourth on back-to-back 3-pointers from Shane Battier and James. The Bulls roared back, as they did for most of the day whenever the Heat seemed on the cusp of taking control.

They just never got the lead, despite Rose's best efforts.

"Two sick moves by D-Rose," Oklahoma City's Kevin Durant tweeted as he watched the game, marveling at two layups by Rose that knotted the game at 84.

Insistence that this was "just another game" notwithstanding, Miami started quickly. Wade appeared a bit more emotionally charged than usual after joining his teammates in the pregame huddle, and the Heat ran out to a fast early edge.

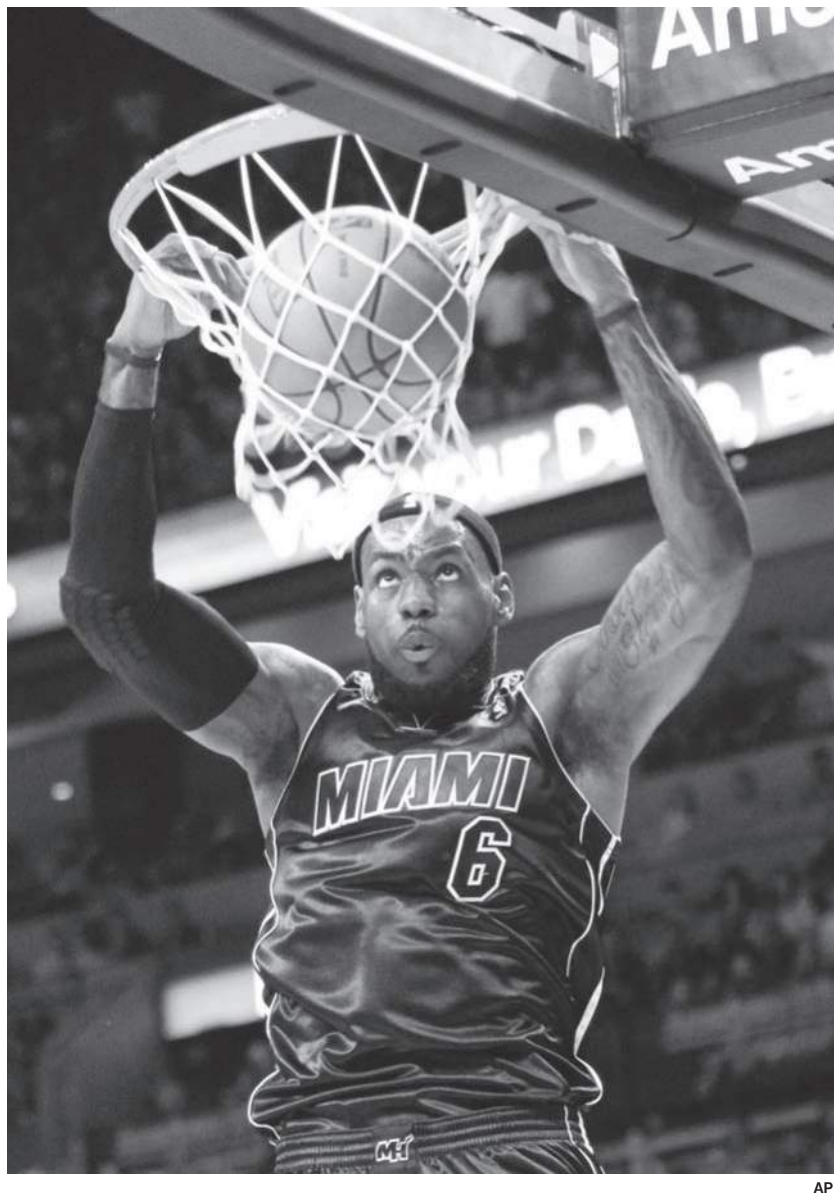
Maybe it would be more accurate to say they "jumped" out to that lead.

Wade set James up for three dunks in the first 7 minutes, the last of which is probably going to be replayed for quite a while. James appeared to be forgotten as he hovered on the weak side of the floor, so he darted toward the basket. Wade tossed a lob his way—and the two-time MVP leapfrogged the 5-foot-11 John Lucas for a dunk that put Miami up 16-7.

Even the NBA took notice of that one: Within minutes, replays of the James dunk were sent out on the league's Twitter feed.

Chicago quickly settled down, getting within 24-22 at the end of the first quarter. But Miami scored 11 straight early in the second, the last seven of those coming with Wade and James both on the bench, to open a 35-24 edge. Wade's first points came with 6:14 left in the half, two free throws that gave Miami what was its biggest lead at 42-30.

The Bulls chipped away again, and by halftime Miami's edge was only 56-51.



AP

Miami Heat small forward LeBron James dunks the ball during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Chicago Bulls, Sunday, Jan. 29, 2012, in Miami.

Mavericks 101, Spurs 100, OT

In Dallas, Jason Terry scored a season-high 34 points, including four in the last 42 seconds of overtime, as Dallas rebounded after blowing an 18-point lead against San Antonio.

Terry put the Mavericks back in the lead to stay when he took a pass from Dirk Nowitzki for a 12-foot baseline jumper with 42 seconds left. After Shawn Marion stole the ball from Gary Neal, Terry hit two free throws with 17 seconds left to make it 101-98.

Neal, who finished with 19 points, then drove for a layup and was fouled by Marion. But Neal missed a potential tying free throw that was rebounded by Ian Mahinmi, who missed two free throws.

Carter had 21 points, his most with the Mavericks. Nowitzki, playing for the first time after a four-game hiatus to strengthen his sore right knee and do conditioning work, had 10 points on 5-of-14 shooting with 13 rebounds.

Cavaliers 88, Celtics 87

In Boston, Kyrie Irving scored 23 points, sinking a layup with 2.6 seconds left as Cleveland scored the last 12 points of the game to beat Boston.

Anderson Varejao had 18 points and nine rebounds for Cleveland, which had lost five of six.

Ray Allen returned from an ankle injury and scored 22 points, making 4 of 6 from 3-point range. But he missed a jumper from the left corner when Boston still held a one-point lead on its second-to-last possession.

Paul Pierce scored 18 points with six rebounds and five assists for the Celtics, who had won four in a row.

Clippers 109, Nuggets 105

In Denver, Chauncey Billups' homecoming couldn't have gone better as he scored a season-high 32 points and drew a crucial foul in the waning seconds to help seal Los Angeles' victory that ended Denver's six-game winning streak.

It was Billups' first game at the Pepsi Center since the Nuggets included him in the Carmelo Anthony blockbuster trade nearly a year ago.

Those cheers turned to groans when Billups scored a dozen points in the first quarter and swished a trio of 3-pointers in the third. But he saved his best play for the fourth quarter.

Chris Paul finished with 25 points, and Blake Griffin added 17.

Pacers 106, Magic 85

In Orlando, Florida, Danny Granger scored 24 points, and David West and George Hill each had 16 as Indiana ran past Orlando.

The Pacers snapped a six-game losing streak to the Magic and avoided losing consecutive games for the first time this season.

Indiana had a 16-2 edge in second-chance points and got 42 points from its bench. The Pacers also went 8 for 17 from 3-point range.

Dwight Howard led the Magic with 24 points and 13 rebounds, but was a dismal 4 for 15 from the free throw line.

Lakers 106, Timberwolves 101

In Minneapolis, Kobe Bryant had 35 points and 14 rebounds, and Pau Gasol scored 28 to give Los Angeles a much-needed road victory over Minnesota.

Andrew Bynum added 21 points for the Lakers, who won for the second time in nine road games this season. They led by 18 in the third quarter, then withstood a furious Timberwolves charge to hang on for their second victory in six games.

Kevin Love had 33 points and 13 rebounds and Michael Beasley added 18 points and 12 boards for the Wolves, who lost to the Lakers for the 16th straight time.

Hawks 94, Hornets 72

In New Orleans, Jeff Teague equaled a career high with 24 points despite playing on a sore left ankle as Atlanta beat New Orleans.

Willie Green added 16 points and Marvin Williams 14 for Atlanta, which won for the fourth time in five games and handed the struggling Hornets their most lopsided loss of the season.

The Hawks broke the game open with a 23-4 run during the last half of the third quarter, while New Orleans was in the midst of missing 12 straight shots.

Emeka Okafor scored 13 points for New Orleans, which has lost 16 of 18.

Raptors 94, Nets 73

In Newark, New Jersey, DeMar DeRozan scored 19 of his 27 points in the second half to lead Toronto over New Jersey.

With injuries playing a role in their 7-14 start, the Raptors received a huge lift from DeRozan. He made eight of 12 shots from the field and 11 of 16 free throws.

Jerryd Bayless finished with 17 points, six rebounds and six assists.

Deron Williams scored 24 for the Nets.

Belichick, Brady in cheerful mood at arrival

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Even the usually dour Bill Belichick was joking around as the New England Patriots arrived in Indianapolis for Super Bowl week.

At his opening news conference Sunday night, Belichick was asked if he expected some Hoosier hospitality.

"I never had too much hospitality here," he said, noting that the Patriots aren't exactly popular in Colts country, "until I went for it on fourth-and-2."

His gamble on that play at the New England 28 with 2:08 to go failed and led to the Colts' winning field goal in a 2009 regular-season game.

"Fans greeted us lots more and were awfully friendly" after that, he added.

All-Pro receiver Wes Welker wasn't familiar with the term when asked the same question.

"What is Hoosier hospitality? What does that consist of?" Welker asked to laughs before getting a full explanation from a local television reporter. "I think it will be a little strange practicing at the Colts' facility. I don't know how many people like that, but we'll be calm and polite and not try to rub it in, so I hope everyone is appreciative of it."

Belichick, dressed in a suit—no hoodie for the coach this time—also said All-Pro tight end Rob Gronkowski is "day to day" with a high left ankle sprain for next Sunday's NFL title game against the New York Giants. Gronkowski has been wearing a walking boot since being injured in the AFC title game.

"You've got to prepare for every one of these situations that come up," quarterback Tom Brady said of the possibility Gronkowski will be limited or sidelined. "You always have to have some contingency plans."

Brady knows the Giants will bring lots of heat with their pass rush, but for now he was more comforted by not having to face a local rival who frequently has put Brady on his back.

"I see Dwight Freeney's picture up there (on the stadium)," Brady said. "When you come to Indy and don't have to play him, we are very fortunate for that."

The Patriots drew about 25,000 fans to Gillette Stadium earlier Sunday for what Brady termed "a pep rally." Team owner Robert Kraft, who has had an emotional year—his wife passed away last July and he was instrumental in resolving the NFL's lockout of the players—was thrilled by the turnout.

"We had 25,000 people come to our stadium today to send the team off," Kraft said. "At the stadium today it was so special, the time we are in now, to have 25,000 of our fans cheer our team is a very emotional experience."

This is Kraft's sixth Super Bowl as owner, and he vividly recalled the days when the team was lucky to draw 25,000 for a game.

"I sat with those crowds. I sat in the stands for 34 years and we had one home playoff game, in 1978, which we lost to Houston," Kraft said. "And last Sunday, we were privileged to host our 15th playoff game."

Snedeker wins a shocker at Torrey Pines

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Brandt Snedeker sat in the media center, resigned to the fact that his 67 in the final round Sunday at Torrey Pines would not be good enough to catch Kyle Stanley in the Farmers Insurance Open.

"I just was too far back. Kyle had too big a lead," Snedeker said, glancing at the television next to him as Stanley, with a three-shot lead, played a simple sand wedge from 77 yards for his third shot to the par-5 18th.

"Uh-oh," Snedeker said.

The ball landed behind the pin and zipped off the front of the green, tumbling slowly down the bank and into the water.

A sure thing suddenly became surreal.

In a meltdown that ranks among the most shocking in golf, Stanley three-putted from 45 feet for a triple bogey on his final hole, then lost on the second playoff hole when his 5-foot par putt caught the right edge of the cup.

"It's just crazy," Snedeker said. "To get my mind around what happened the last 30 minutes is pretty hard to do right now. My heart is out to Kyle. I feel bad for him to have to go through this."

Minutes away from a celebration, Stanley was in tears. His lip quivered as he tried to explain what went wrong, a sad ending to an otherwise spectacular week along the Pacific bluffs.

"It's not a hard golf hole," Stanley said. "I could probably play it a thousand times and never make an 8."

Stanley led by seven shots early in the final round, and he still had a four-shot lead as he stood on the tee at the par-5 18th, the easiest hole at Torrey Pines on Sunday. Just like that, the 24-year-old went from being anointed a rising star to being listed with Jean Van de Velde, Robert Garrigus and so many others who learned the hard way how cruel this game can be.

"I'm kind of in shock right now," Stanley said.

Snedeker, playing in the group ahead of Stanley, bogeyed the 17th to fall four shots behind. He hit wedge to a foot on the 18th hole for one last birdie to finish on 16-under 272.

Both made birdie on the 18th in the playoff, and it ended on the par-3 16th with another good break for Snedeker. His 5-iron bounced hard over the green and was headed into the canyon when it bounced off a television tower. He chipped to 5 feet and made par. Stanley left his 45-foot birdie putt about 5 feet short, and missed it for a bogey.

"You never want to see anybody go through that," Snedeker said. "I don't care who it is—not even your worst enemy on the planet. Golf is such a funny game, and to have that kind of lead coming into the last hole and not to win is tough. It will be a tough night for him. But he's an unbelievably talented player, and the sky's the limit for him.

"And I hope he does not beat himself up too much over this."

Snedeker is making a habit of these comebacks. In all three of his PGA Tour wins, he trailed by at least five shots going into the last round. At Hilton Head last year, he came from six shots back and wound up beating Luke Donald in a playoff.

This one was handed to him.

"This one I kind of backed into," Snedeker said. "You never like winning a tournament that way. But you do like winning."

Stanley birdied his first two holes—Snedeker was nine behind at that point—and led by six shots at the turn until he started dropping shots from the sand. Even so, he made three straight par putts, starting with a 12-footer on the 14th, to seemingly regain control.

The kid knows heartache. Last summer, he was two shots ahead at the John Deere Classic until he bogeyed the final hole from a bunker, and Steve Stricker closed with two straight birdies to win.

This loss, however, put him in the wrong kind of company.

It was reminiscent of Van de Velde at Carnoustie, who made triple bogey on the last hole of the 1999 British Open and lost in a playoff; of Garrigus, who made triple bogey on the last hole of the St. Jude Classic in 2010 and lost in a playoff; and even of Frank Lickliter at Torrey Pines, who three-putted from 12 feet on the 17th hole in 2001 to make triple bogey in the third playoff hole in losing to Phil Mickelson.

"I know I'll be back," Stanley said, pausing to allow the words to come out of his mouth. "It's tough to swallow right now."

Stanley stood over a 25-foot birdie putt on the 17th hole with a four-shot lead, and it was matter of staying upright for the next 20 minutes to collect his first PGA Tour win.

If only it were that simple.

Snedeker made his tap-in birdie to finish. Stanley hit a 300-yard drive and kept it simple by laying up.

Then, he fell apart.

His sand wedge had too much spin and did not get high enough on the green, spinning quickly down the slope.

"We tried to lay it up close enough so that we wouldn't put that much spin on it," Stanley said. "Thought I had a pretty good shot, but just had too much spin."

Stanley showed little emotion, as he had done all week, and took his drop in the first cut to eliminate some of the spin. His fifth shot was safely on the back of the green, some 45 feet away.

With a putt down into the bowl of the green, he came up about 3 1/2 feet short, then missed it well to the left for a triple-bogey 8. He had to sign for a 74, without breaking the pencil, then head back to the 18th for a playoff.

Snedeker caught a minor break on the first extra hole when his second shot stopped directly in front of a loose divot. He managed to remove it without moving the ball, then hit sand wedge to 3 feet for birdie. Stanley went for the green in two this time, just over the green, and chipped down to the same spot as Snedeker and matched his birdie.

John Rollins had 235 yards to the green on the 18th hole, two shots behind Snedeker, two shots clear of fourth place. He elected to lay up and wound up with a par. It gave him a 71, and he finished alone in third at 14-under 274.

AP

Brandt Snedeker poses with the trophy after his playoff win during final round of the Farmers Insurance Open Golf tournament in San Diego, Sunday, Jan., 29, 2012.

Tiger falters as Rock wins Abu Dhabi Championship

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Tiger Woods talked all week about his improved ball control—then it let him down when he needed it most.

Woods resembled the Tiger of old over the first three rounds at the Abu Dhabi Championship, stringing together a trio of rounds below par before shooting an even 72 in Sunday's finale to finish in a tie for third place behind winner Robert Rock and U.S. Open champion Rory McIlroy.

The 117th-ranked Rock shot 70 for an overall 275 to beat McIlroy (69) by a shot. Woods was a further shot back with Thomas Bjorn (68) and Graeme McDowell (68). The 18-year-old Italian Matteo Manassero (69) and George Coetzee (70) of South Africa were another shot back.

"Today I just didn't give myself enough looks at it," Woods said. "Most of my putts were lag putts. I didn't drive the ball in as many fairways as I should have ... It was a day I was just a touch off the tee and consequently I couldn't get the ball close enough."

It marked the second straight time Woods hasn't won with at least a share of the lead after 54 holes. He failed to win the Chevron World Challenge in 2010 after going into the final round with a four-shot lead over McDowell.

The 14-time major winner appears to have recovered from a two-year victory drought in which he was sidelined by injuries and personal turmoil. But Woods must now face the fact that, at age 36, there are plenty of players—known and unknown—who can potentially beat him.

Woods, though, was looking for the silver lining out of his third-place finish. He insisted he has been steadily improving—hitting a high percentage of fairways and greens until Sunday and putting much better.

"There's plenty of big events to go, but I'm pleased at the progress I've made so far," said Woods, who won the Chevron World Challenge last month to end his drought. "I just need to keep building, keep getting more consistent, and today was a day where I putted beautifully. Just didn't give myself enough looks."

Coming into Sunday, Woods was tied for the lead with the unheralded Rock and was the clear favorite to win. Rock had only one victory under his belt compared to 83 for Woods worldwide, but it was Rock—battling his nerves over playing alongside one of his golfing idols—who held it together down the stretch.

"It's pretty hard to believe that I managed to win today. Very surprised," the Englishman said. "I played good. So I guess I had a chance from early on, a couple of birdies made the day feel a little bit easier."

"But it's difficult playing with Tiger. You expect almost every shot to threaten to go in. It felt a lot of pressure and couldn't afford any lapses in concentration at all."

Woods started strong and it looked as though he might pull away from Rock, sinking a 40-footer on No. 2 for birdie and chipping to within a foot of the cup for a second birdie on the 3rd. But Rock didn't blink, making birdie on two of the first three holes to keep pace.

Then Woods began to unravel.

He started spraying his drives into the thick rough and fairway bunkers, resulting in bogeys on Nos. 4 and 5. When Woods wasn't missing the fairways, he was scrambling to save par as he did on 11 after overshooting the green. As he approached his shot in deep rough just off the 11th green, he sighed heavily and let out a stream of obscenities under his breath.

Woods managed to save par by sinking a 12-footer and Rock just missed a birdie putt. Woods pumped his fist and appeared to be regaining momentum as he pulled within one shot of Rock on No. 13 when the Englishman had one of his three bogeys. But the 34-year-old Rock birdied two of the next three holes to regain control.

Rock wobbled on the 18th when his drive landed in a pile of rocks near the water—forcing him to take a drop—but he recovered beautifully, reaching the green in four and two-putting for the win.

"I was just focusing on trying to hit fairways and then hit my iron shots as good as I have been and give myself chances at birdies," Rock said. "Both Tiger and Peter struggled on occasions on a few holes and I managed to keep my ball in the right position and didn't put myself under too much stress until the last, which was a relief."

It was a storybook ending for Rock, who rose from a club pro to join the European Tour in 2003 and only got his first tour win last year at the Italian Open. The victory will elevate him into the top 60.

"It doesn't get an awful lot harder than playing with Tiger Woods," Rock said. "So I guess barring a major championship, I know I can handle that again. So that's pretty nice to know."

While most of the attention was on Rock and Woods, several players surged into contention down the stretch.

McIlroy, playing ahead of Rock and Woods, birdied No. 18 to move to 12 under and give himself a chance. But he came up short with four rounds of par or better golf being undone by several costly mistakes—the worst coming Friday when the third-ranked McIlroy was penalized two shots for brushing away sand in front of his ball in the rough of the 9th.

"You know, you've got to take the positives," McIlroy said. "It's the first week of the year, and you know, it looks like it's going to be the second year in a row here that I'll finish second. But still a very good start to the season and something I'll build on."

McDowell played the most exciting round of the tournament on Sunday, with an ace on No. 12, a chip-in on 13 and then a shot off the grandstand on the 18th that led to a birdie and a tie for third. For the 2010 U.S. Open champion, it was a good way to start the year after failing to win in 2011.

DJOKOVIC

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As the players waited for the trophy presentation, Nadal leaned on the net, while Djokovic sat on his haunches. Eventually, a nearby official took pity and they were given chairs and bottles of water.

Nadal held his composure during the formalities, and even opened his speech with a lighthearted one-liner.

"Good morning, everybody," he said.A few minutes earlier, after hugging Nadal at the net, Djokovic tore off his sweat-soaked black shirt and headed toward his players' box, pumping his arms repeatedly as he roared. He walked over to his girlfriend, his coach and the rest of his support team and banged on the advertising signs at the side of the court.

"I think it was just the matter of maybe luck in some moments and matter of wanting this more than maybe other player in the certain point," Djokovic said. "It's just incredible effort. You're in pain, you're suffer(ing). You're trying to activate your legs. You're going through so much suffering your toes are bleeding. Everything is just outrageous, but you're still enjoying that pain."

The match was full of long rallies and amazing gets. Djokovic finished with 57 winners, along with 69 unforced errors. Nadal had 44 winners against 71 unforced errors.

Laver was part of the 15,000-strong crowd when the players walked on at 7:30 p.m. Sunday to flip the coin and start the warmup. He was still there, along with most of the crowd, after 2 a.m. for the trophy presentations.

Djokovic called it the most special of his five Grand Slam wins.

"This one I think comes out on the top because just the fact that we played almost six hours is incredible, incredible," he said. "I think it's probably the longest finals in the history of all Grand Slams, and just to hear that fact is making me cry, really.

"I'm very proud just to be part of this history."

It went so long because Nadal refused to yield. He was trying to avoid becoming the first man to lose three consecutive Grand Slam finals—and seeing his losing streak in finals stretch to seven against Djokovic, who beat him for the Wimbledon and U.S. Open titles and took his No. 1 ranking last year.

After a grueling four-set loss to Djokovic at Flushing Meadows last year, Nadal said that, indeed, he may have found a slight opening—a glimmer of hope for next time against the player who dominated the 2011 season and had dismantled him time and again over the year.

This one was, in fact, closer, though not necessarily because of any strategic changes, but rather, because Rafa summoned up the heart to take this one the distance.

Nadal stayed in the contest for almost every point, sprinting from one side of the court to the other, chasing down balls and making Djokovic work extra time for the victory. But in the end, the same man was holding the trophy.

Nadal thought his win in the 2008 final against Federer was the best match he's played, but gave Sunday's match a top place in his personal rankings nonetheless.

"This one was very special," he said. "But I really understand that was a really special match, and probably a match that's going to be in my mind not because I lost, no, because the way that we played."

Djokovic had his off moments during this two-week tournament Down Under. He appeared to struggle for breath in his quarterfinal win over No. 5 David Ferrer and again during his five-set semifinal win over No. 4 Andy Murray. He blamed it on allergies, and he managed to control it better against Nadal.

Yet, at times in the final, he looked as if he couldn't go on.

When Nadal fended off three break points at 4-4 in the fourth set to win the game, spectators jumped to their feet and chanted "Rafa, Rafa, Rafa, Rafa!" Djokovic had lost the momentum. Play was stopped moments later when rain started to fall and a suddenly animated Nadal threw his arms up in disbelief and walked slowly back to his chair. The stadium roof was then closed.

Djokovic picked up his game after a 10-minute break and his pockets of supporters waved their Serbian flags again and started their own competing chant of "Nole, Nole, Nole"—inserting Djokovic's nickname where "Ole" belongs in the tune and rhythm of the Spanish soccer chant.

It wasn't enough to get him through the tiebreaker in the fourth set, though, when Nadal won the last four points to finish it in 88 minutes. Nadal dropped to his knees on the baseline and pumped his arms at that point, celebrating as if he'd won the final. All he'd done was prolong it. This pair had never gone to five sets.

Just as he did during the first set, Djokovic took off a white shirt and replaced it with a black one.

It didn't seem to help immediately as he went down a break and a defeat loomed.

The match clock hit 5 hours with the score 2-2 in the fifth. Nadal won the next point and Djokovic started to stumble slightly, unsteady on his feet.

Nadal held that game without losing a point and then broke Djokovic for a 4-2 lead.

The turning point came in the next game, when Nadal had an open court but knocked a backhand volley wide down the line. He challenged the call, but the ball was clearly out. Instead of being up 40-15 and one point from a 5-2 lead, the game score became 30-30.

Djokovic found energy again and got a break point with a backhand that forced an error from Nadal. He pounced on a Nadal second serve to convert the break as the match clock ticked to 5:15, confirming it as the longest match in the history of the Australian Open. Nadal had that record, at 5:14, in his five-set semifinal win over fellow Spaniard Fernando Verdasco in 2009.

This match had already long surpassed Mats Wilander's win over Ivan Lendl at the 1988 U.S. Open, in 4:54, as the longest final in the terms of duration.

Djokovic started to look better physically and Nadal started to make some unforced errors, giving the Serbian some extra seconds between points to get his heavy breathing under control. After getting back on serve at 4-4, Djokovic kissed the crucifix around his neck twice.

With Nadal serving, the pair engaged in a 31-shot rally that Nadal finally won when Djokovic committed a backhand error. The Serb fell flat on his back on the court, fully stretched out, arms over his head, while Nadal doubled over on his side of the court, hands perched on his knees.

It appeared Djokovic was ready to throw in the towel, but he said he never thought about staying down.

"At that point I was just thinking of getting some air and trying to recover for next point," he said. "Thousand thoughts going through the mind. Trying to separate the right from wrong. Trying to prioritize the next point. I'm playing against one of the best players ever—the player that is so mentally strong. He was going for everything or nothing."

When Djokovic got the break to go up 5-4, the Serbian fans jumped up with their flags and screamed while the rest of the crowd sat in stony silence.

After kissing the crucifix around his neck repeatedly in the later games, Djokovic openly prayed out loud and looked upward as he got within points of sealing his victory.

"I was trying find every possible help and energy that I possibly can," he said. "It paid off I guess."

NORIKO

From Page 28

with fourth through 10th places receiving points in descending order; and all other participants being issued a point for attendance.

The points are tallied throughout the season, and the player that accumulates the most wins top prize at the CWGA's finale.

Established in March 2007, the CWGA is a nonprofit organization founded to promote, encourage, and introduce women to the sport of golf in the CNMI.

Its organizational goals consist of promoting civic and community interest in golf; establishing and encouraging competition and good sportsmanship; promoting and providing social functions of its members and families; promoting youth golf activities; and doing all things necessary and proper to accomplish its purpose and intentions.

CWGA members also pledge to abide by a set of values that will further enrich a golfer's performance, attitude and conduct. Such values were adopted from the USA Junior Golf Association. They include perseverance, sportsmanship, respect, honesty, judgment, responsibility, reliance, courtesy and sincerity.

For more information, contact Noriko Togawa at 287-0027, Lou Kim at 483-5255, Terry Tudela at 483-1761, Lorraine Babauta at 287-0621, or Bennet Seman at 483-0126.

ALOMER

From Page 28

of mini-games coupled with a volleyball tournament. A rummage sale and pearl shake stand were also available for those in attendance.

Remarkably, the Alomer and Perez duos competed as one team and finished first place in both events.

The mini-games included a Snickers Scramble, Grab Bag, Wacky Waiter, Spoon Toss Race, and Mom or Dad Calling.

Eight teams participated in the set of activities, which was formatted based on a point system for each event.

In the end, the Alomer and Perez families competed as Team 4 and accumulated the most points with 28.

Team 4 members included Regis Perez, John Tam, Jethro Cruz, Yuuki Nishida, and Rey Perez.

The group won three IT&E $5 phone cards and a gift bag, a water park pass for two at Pacific Islands Club, a lunch buffet for two at Hyatt Regency Saipan, a T-shirt from The Trap, a $10 Shell fuel card, and an i-party accessory that can be used with Ipod music players.

Team's 2's Roger, Katrina, RV, IV, and Roger Valencia Sr. with Gamela and Sheen Sheen Alegre finished in second place with 26 points.

Team 2 won three $5 prepaid IT&E cards and gift bag, a PIC water park pass for two, a Shell fuel card, and a Trap T-shirt.

K.C., Wilmor, and Zion Alomer teamed up with Regis and his father Rey Perez and represented Team 4 which went undefeated in the volleyball tournament.

The group won another water park pass for two at PIC, a lunch for two at Saipan Grand Hotel, three more IT&E $5 prepaid cards, and gift bag and another Trap T-shirt.

Team 4 swept Team 3 in two sets, 12-5 and 12-7, and then bested Team 1 after just two sets, 12-7 and 12-10.

Then after dropping the opening set, 6-12, Team 4 then thundered back over Team 8 in the next two matches 12-2 and 12-3.

Team 1 fought its way back into the finals over Team 8, 12-8, 7-12, and 12-9; but Team 4 held strong in the end, 12-8, 7-12, and 12-8.

Game point was set at 12 with a must-win-by-two rule in effect. Eight teams made up the field.

House Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogumoro (Cov-Saipan) was also on hand to present the kids there awards and thanked the crowd for coming out to the event.

Ogumoro also wants to remind the public that this upcoming February is headlined Parent Leadership Month and to check out the GCDC's calendar of events as it plans to has plans of holding similar activities in February and through out the year.

The GCDC is currently collaborating with the Department of Youth Services, the Workers Investment Agency, and the Northern Marianas College's General Education Diploma program.

"Our goal is to enhance the quality of life in the community through our family-strengthening programs," said Ogumorro on Saturday.

Ogumoro added that the GCDC's main areas of focus begins with training and educating those who need assistance and ends with helping such youths and adults find employment.

Various parenting courses are being offered such as common sense parenting, active-teen parenting, and parents anonymous.

GCDC also works with NMC to offer basic adult education classes.

There are currently 30 participants that just finished their placement tests.

The next step in the process is for them to complete mastery tests before they can obtain general education diplomas.

Once the participants receive their GEDs, they can enroll in secondary education classes at NMC.

In addition, the winners of the 2nd Annual IT&E X-mas Youth Friendly Basketball Tournament finally received their medals and prizes from the event held back on Dec. 16 and 17, 2011.

U10 champions John Paul Cruz, Angelo Factor, and John Tam received a basketball and a tennis set equipped with two rackets and a ball provided by All-Star Sporting Goods and a pair of water bottles with Accel Gel from Brabu Pharmacy.

U12's Angelo Factor, Kristian Itaas, C.J. Morales, and Kyle Rios were awarded a tennis set, a Trap shirt, a $20 gift certificate at the 670 Rocksteady Shop, and a $45 gift certificate for Boarderline.

And finally, U15's Jeron Ano, Emerson Feria, Irvyn Malonzo, and Toshi Pangelinan were presented with a $25 gift certificate to Athlete's Foot, a $20 670 Rocksteady Shop certificate, a Rawlings youth football, and a water bottle with a pack of Accel Gel.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	14	6	.700	–
Boston	9	10	.474	4 1/2
New York	7	13	.350	7
New Jersey	7	14	.333	7 1/2
Toronto	7	14	.333	7 1/2

Southeast Division

Miami	15	5	.750	–
Atlanta	15	6	.714	1/2
Orlando	12	8	.600	3
Washington	4	16	.200	11
Charlotte	3	18	.143	12 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	17	5	.773	–
Indiana	13	6	.684	2 1/2
Milwaukee	8	11	.421	7 1/2
Cleveland	8	11	.421	7 1/2
Detroit	4	17	.190	12 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	13	8	.619	–
Houston	12	8	.600	1/2
San Antonio	12	9	.571	1
Memphis	10	9	.526	2
New Orleans	4	16	.200	8 1/2

Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	16	3	.842	–
Denver	14	6	.700	2 1/2
Utah	11	7	.611	4 1/2
Portland	12	8	.600	4 1/2
Minnesota	9	11	.450	7 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Clippers	11	6	.647	–
L.A. Lakers	12	9	.571	1
Phoenix	7	12	.368	5
Golden State	6	12	.333	5 1/2
Sacramento	6	14	.300	6 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Miami 97, Chicago 93
Cleveland 88, Boston 87
Toronto 94, New Jersey 73
Indiana 106, Orlando 85
Dallas 101, San Antonio 100, OT
Atlanta 94, New Orleans 72
L.A. Lakers 106, Minnesota 101
L.A. Clippers 109, Denver 105

FARMERS INSURANCE OPEN SCORES

LA QUINTA, California (AP)–Scores Sunday from the $6-million Farmer Insurance Open, a US PGA Tour event played at the 7,698-yard, par-72 Torrey Pines South Course (n) and the 7,094-yard, par-72 Torrey Pines North Course (n).

FINAL ROUND

x-Brandt Snedeker (500), $1,080,000	67s-64n-74-67–272
Kyle Stanley (300), $648,000	62n-68s-68-74–272
John Rollins (190), $408,000	70s-65n-68-71–274
Bill Haas (123), $264,000	63n-71s-70-72–276
Cameron Tringale (123), $264,000	67n-72s-66-71–276
Hunter Mahan (95), $208,500	69s-65n-74-69–277
John Huh (95), $208,500	64n-71s-68-74–277
Jimmy Walker (75), $162,000	73s-65n-70-70–278
Martin Flores (75), $162,000	65n-67s-75-71–278
Justin Leonard (75), $162,000	65n-70s-71-72–278
Rod Pampling (75), $162,000	64n-75s-68-71–278
D.A. Points (75), $162,000	70s-70n-67-71–278
Vijay Singh (54), $96,667	64n-75s-71-69–279
Bill Lunde (54), $96,667	74n-68s-68-69–279
Rickie Fowler (54), $96,667	68n-70s-71-70–279
Bryce Molder (54), $96,667	71s-70n-68-70–279
Stewart Cink (54), $96,667	69s-68n-72-70–279
Bud Cauley (54), $96,667	69n-70s-73-67–279
Bubba Watson (54), $96,667	69n-71s-68-71–279
Ryo Ishikawa (0), $96,667	69s-69n-69-72–279
Scott Piercy (54), $96,667	70n-68s-68-73–279
Keegan Bradley (47), $57,600	69n-68s-73-70–280
Robert Allenby (47), $57,600	68n-67s-73-72–280
Pat Perez (47), $57,600	66n-70s-71-73–280
Camilo Villegas (47), $57,600	65n-72s-70-73–280
Jonas Blixt (47), $57,600	70s-70n-65-75–280
Aaron Baddeley (42), $41,700	70n-72s-69-70–281
Brendon de Jonge (42), $41,700	70s-70n-69-72–281
Seung-Yul Noh (42), $41,700	69n-72s-71-69–281
Nick O'Hern (42), $41,700	69s-70n-74-68–281
James Driscoll (42), $41,700	68s-69n-70-74–281
Tim Herron (42), $41,700	68n-70s-69-74–281
Michael Bradley (34), $29,100	69n-71s-70-72–282
John Merrick (34), $29,100	74s-66n-70-72–282
Chris Riley (34), $29,100	67n-70s-72-73–282
Greg Chalmers (34), $29,100	65n-72s-72-73–282
Marc Turnesa (34), $29,100	66s-72n-74-70–282
Justin Rose (34), $29,100	71s-68n-70-73–282
Trevor Immelman (34), $29,100	71s-70n-71-70–282
Roberto Castro (34), $29,100	70n-72s-71-69–282
Cameron Beckman (34), $29,100	68s-72n-74-68–282
Sang-Moon Bae (34), $29,100	65n-67s-72-78–282
Tom Pernice Jr. (25), $18,720	69n-72s-69-73–283
Charles Howell III (25), $18,720	72n-69s-69-73–283
Harris English (25), $18,720	67n-72s-72-72–283
Spencer Levin (25), $18,720	62n-76s-73-72–283
Ricky Barnes (25), $18,720	69s-70n-73-71–283
Blake Adams (25), $18,720	75s-67n-70-71–283
Dustin Johnson (25), $18,720	66n-72s-70-75–283
Geoff Ogilvy (21), $14,940	72s-70n-67-75–284
Paul Goydos (21), $14,940	68s-72n-69-75–284
Chris DiMarco (16), $13,785	68n-70s-72-75–285
Marc Leishman (16), $13,785	72s-69n-70-74–285
Kevin Chappell (16), $13,785	73s-69n-69-74–285
Marco Dawson (16), $13,785	67s-73n-72-73–285
J.J. Killeen (16), $13,785	72s-69n-67-77–285
Charley Hoffman (16), $13,785	71s-68n-74-72–285
Andres Romero (16), $13,785	68n-73s-72-72–285
Ernie Els (16), $13,785	71s-70n-72-72–285
Bobby Gates (10), $13,020	76s-64n-70-76–286
Jhonattan Vegas (10), $13,020	69s-68n-73-76–286
Nick Watney (10), $13,020	69s-68n-75-74–286
Richard H. Lee (10), $13,020	72s-69n-73-72–286
Chez Reavie (7), $12,660	72s-67n-75-74–288
Mark D. Anderson (7), $12,660	73s-68n-73-74–288
Tommy Biershenk (3), $12,240	70n-71s-72-76–289
Josh Teater (3), $12,240	64n-77s-72-76–289
Gary Christian (3), $12,240	72n-70s-71-76–289
Steve Marino (3), $12,240	69n-71s-74-75–289
Duffy Waldorf (3), $12,240	70n-69s-75-75–289
Chris Kirk (1), $11,880	70s-72n-72-76–290
Greg Owen (1), $11,760	75s-67n-71-78–291
Colt Knost (1), $11,640	66n-74s-74-79–293

(x-won on second playoff hole)

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

2011 Summer-Fall SEDA League

Photos by WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Sands Bar's Anie's Imuza poses with their C-Division first place trophies.

Bar Gaia's Gaiana-B players show off their B-Flame Tree Bud Light Cup awards.

D'Pirates Choice Bar's Mixed Bloodshooters 2 pose for a group photo with their Tuesday B-League Bud Light Cup trophies.

Naked Fish Bar & Grill's Oh! MG was hailed Bud Light Cup champions for the C-Division.

Es'y Kitchen's SOS Akiramenai poses with their B-Fanihi Bud Light Cup trophies during the Saipan Electronic Darts Association's 2011 Summer-Fall League awards banquet held last Jan. 22 at Pacific Islands Club's Charley's Cabaret.

Es'y Kitchen's Echoserong Kamote's took first place in the B-Fanihi Division.

The divisional High-Out winners gather for a group photo.

D'Pirates' Sabalu Boys smile with their Tuesday B-League first place trophies.

D'Pirates' Try Luck poses for a team photo with their Ladies Division first place trophies.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s Power Plant poses for a team photo with their Inter-Government Division first place trophies.

Snedeker wins a shocker at Torrey Pines
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Sports

James, Heat escape with win over Bulls
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Djokovic wins Australian Open in longest final

By JOHN PYE
AP SPORTS WRITER

Novak Djokovic ripped off his shirt and let out a primal scream, flexing his torso the way a prize fighter would after a desperate, last-round knockout.

This was the final act in Djokovic's 5-7, 6-4, 6-2, 6-7 (5), 7-5 victory over Rafael Nadal in the Australian Open final—a sweat-drenched, sneaker-squeaking 5 hour, 53-minute endurance contest that ended at 1:37 a.m. Monday morning in Melbourne.

Djokovic overcame a break in the fifth set to win his fifth Grand Slam tournament and third in a row. None, though, quite like this. This one involved tears, sweat and, yes, even a little blood. It was the longest Grand Slam singles final in the history of pro tennis and it came against Nadal, the player who built a career on his tenacity—on outlasting opponents in matches like these.

"It was obvious on the court for everybody who has watched the match that both of us, physically, we took the last drop of energy that we had from our bodies," Djokovic said. "We made history tonight and unfortunately there couldn't be two winners."

When the drama was finally over at Rod Laver Arena, the 24-year-old Djokovic joined Laver, Pete Sampras, Roger Federer and Nadal as the only men who have won three consecutive majors since the Open Era began in 1968. Nadal was his vanquished opponent in all three.

Djokovic will go for the "Nole Slam" at Roland Garros in May.

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AP

Novak Djokovic of Serbia, left, holds the championship trophy as Rafael Nadal of Spain looks at his runner-up trophy during the awarding ceremony after Djokovic won the men's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championship, in Melbourne, Australia, early Monday, Jan. 30, 2012.

Noriko wins CWGA January Ace

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

Noriko Togawa topped a field of 15 to win the first CNMI Women's Golf Association Ace of the Month held last Jan. 14 at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort's west course.

Togawa split a pair of 38s on both the front and back to finish the round with a gross total of 76 that adjusted into a field-low 72 net score.

Togawa became the first qualifier in the club's yearend tournament and also accrued 15 points for a nice jumpstart on the season. Coincidentally she also posted the lowest gross score of the day.

Daughter Yuko Togawa finished just one stroke back in second place.

She started with a 41 on the first nine holes, but recovered after the turn with a 36 for a gross card of 77 that worked into a 73 net count. Yuko Togawa was awarded 14 points for her runner-up honors.

Chang Eun Ae rounded out the third spot, going out with a 47 and finished with a 43 on the back set for a raw tally of 90 that adjusted into a 74 net score.

Chang received 13 points,

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Noriko Togawa, seen here in a file photo, won CNMI Women's Golf Association's January Ace of the Month held last Jan. 14 at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort.
WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Joe Sablan wins GCA golf fundraiser tourney

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

Joe Sablan beat a field of 61 golfers to win the top prize in Grace Christian Academy's fundraiser golf tournament at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort on Saturday.

Sablan marked a 39 on the front nine and finished the backside with a 37 for a gross tally of 76 that calculated to a field low net score of 67.6. He won a $300 cash prize.

Sablan

Kim Min Gyu took runner-up honors, while Ralph Yumul edged J.J. Cabrera for third place via tie-breaker; Gyu received $200 and Yumul $100.

Gyu scratched a 37 on the front leg with a 38 on the back nine for a field-low raw score of 75 that worked into an even net total of 69.

Yumul took a 42 on the front and a 44 after the turn for a gross count of 86 that adjusted into a 70.4 net tally.

Cabrera started out with a 47 and came into the clubhouse with a 45 for a raw total of 92 that tied Yumul's net score, however the latter's lesser handicap gave him the nod.

In addition, Roy Ada won closest to the pin honors on hole No. 7 and Manny Paul took the prize for hole No. 14. Both golfers were awarded cell phones from IT&E.

Other various consolation prizes were also given away such as golf balls, golf tees, and other equipment.

The event utilized a double-Peoria scoring system to determine each golfer's net scores.

Proceeds of the event went to help 10 GCA students to go on their senior trip to Guam in April.

The students would like to thank all of the golfers for coming out, especially the X-clusive Golfer's Association, for helping organizing the event. The group also expressed it utmost appreciation to all of the volunteers who helped the event run smoothly as well as to IT&E for the prizes and Pacific Trading Co. for providing drinks.

Alomer, Perez families clean up in GCDC Family-Fun-Athon

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Alomer and Perez families landed a nice array of prizes in the Garapan Community Development Center's Family-Fun-Athon held last Saturday at its location in Garapan.

The activities included a set

See ALOMER on Page 26

Team 4 members pose with House Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogumoro, left, and Garapan Community Development Center's Joe Diaz, right, after being presented with their prizes for winning the Family-Fun-Athon Volleyball Tournament held last Saturday at GCDC.
WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND